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The Week

THE more aggressive action of the Federal Reserve Banks in buying government bonds, which they had already been accumulating at the rate of $25,000,000 a week since the passage of the Glass-Steagall bill, will be a real test of the question whether central banking policy can be used effectively to relieve depression, once depression is with us. The action is certainly calculated to improve the bond market and enlarge the credit resources of the member banks. Those who believe it will actually benefit trade, employment and commodity prices argue on the supposition that if private business can freely float bonds and borrow money from the banks it will proceed to do so and will use the money in enlarged production. Those who doubt this result are skeptical because they fear that, under depression conditions, business can find no good use for the capital and credit, and will not demand it in large quantities, no matter how much is available. This is the basis of the argument that we must use the government as an agency to be[illegible] culation by an enlarged spending program. We await the result of the test with interest, but we regret that it is not being reënforced at the beginning by a program of governmental construction.

WITH almost everyone proclaiming that a war in Manchuria is unlikely, if not impossible, events are rapidly moving toward a crisis between Japan and the Soviets. On April 12, a Japanese troop train was wrecked near Harbin, on the Chinese Eastern Railway, which is owned jointly by the Soviets and China. A spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Office thereupon declared that the wreck was "the work of Russian Communists." He admitted that positive proof was lacking, but said that if such provocative acts were repeated, "they undoubtedly would have serious consequences." The Soviets claim that the wreck was caused by White Guard refugees in Manchuria, who have caused other wrecks in the past and have worked unceasingly to bring about a war which might restore them to power. On April 15 or 16, the White Guards in Harbin attacked the offices of the Chinese Eastern Railway and assaulted the Soviet manager, while Japanese troops and local police controlled by them looked on without interfering. The Japanese newspapers did not mention this riot. Instead they brought forward the proposal that the Chinese Eastern should be changed from Russian to standard gauge and incorporated with the Japanese railway system in Manchuria, a plain act of international theft. For Japan to steal the Chinese Eastern would probably not lead directly to war; but if she used it to move troops to the Siberian border, where nine Russian divisions are now concentrated, an open conflict would almost certainly follow.

EVEN without the Manchurian question, the situation in the Far East is rich in occasions for war. There is the matter of Japanese fishery rights off the Siberian coast, now being negotiated by diplomats in Moscow and Japanese cruisers in the Pacific. There are the Japanese oil concessions in the southern half of Sakhalin, which the Japanese

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Soviet troops in the northern half of the island. There is the ambition of a powerful Japanese military clique to conquer all of Asia as far west as Lake Baikal, and to do so before Russia is strong enough in railways and factories to make an effective resistance. On the other hand, most of the Japanese business men are opposed to war, and the Soviet government is trying to maintain peace by any means in its power, including the very practical means of stationing a hundred thousand well trained troops along the Siberian border. But the question of peace or war in the East will probably be decided in western Europe: it depends essentially on the French policy toward Russia. If the French keep their hands off, and advise the Poles and Rumanians not to attack the Soviets from the west, then Japan will probably content herself with her conquests in Manchuria. A single-handed offensive against Russia would not be greatly to the advantage of Japan: she might even take a licking for her pains. But a general crusade against communism, participated in by all the border states and financed by French capital, would be a different matter, and a very serious matter for the future of the world.

IF Adolf Hitler had been given the privilege of choosing the moment for the inevitable governmental attack on his military machine, he could hardly have asked for a more opportune time. The recent emergency decree ordering the dissolution of his troops comes when the Geneva and Lausanne Conferencs, plus the Prussian state election, are keeping all Germany in a state of suspense, which works to Hitler's advantage. His newspapers are charging that Brüning acted under coercion from the French, and the German Chancellor has followed a course which gives color to this accusation. Naturally, any indication that German policy is being modified to suit French desires plays into the hands of the Nazis. Hitler is also favored by the developments among the Danubian countries and in the Balkans, where France seems to be trying to destroy German trade, and by Polish and Lithuanian aggression on the German border. If he should win an important victory on April 24, these facts will help to explain the size of his vote.

MR. de Valera, the new President of Ireland, finds himself in the customary difficulties of the radical critic who at last assumes the responsibilities of office. Already he is temporizing far too much for the real extremists, who have already expressed their intention of refusing to coöperate. They want the Free State combined with Ulster into one government, with one army, one navy and one parliament. From the other side, Mr. de Valera is being attacked by British manufacturers who have branches in Ireland, and announce that if he goes ing thousands of persons to the list of the unemployed. De Valera hopes to answer these threats by going to the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa and bringing back a series of handsome preferential tariffs for Ireland. This is a sound opportunist suggestion, but it certainly comes rather oddly from the erstwhile irreconcilable Sinn Feiner.

MAYOR Walker of New York is organizing a nationwide series of anti-prohibition parades to take place on May 14, in support of a demand that beer be legalized. The whole episode is a perfect illustration of Jimmie Walker's character and helps to explain why good government is practically impossible in New York City. The Walker administration is now being subjected to withering criticism by the Seabury Committee. Dishonesty has been shown to be rampant throughout the whole city government. Through wastefulness and inefficiency, the municipality has been brought to the verge of bankruptcy, and the lives of more than half a million unemployed are actually imperiled because the city may not be able to buy them food. At this juncture, and with his own conduct about to be investigated, Mayor Walker comes forward with the foolish, illogical, but brilliantly attractive idea, that on May 14 those who don't like prohibition may say so with feet. All the charges against him and his administration will be drowned out by the cheering multitude who hope that their dry throats may presently be moistened with alcoholic beverages. Is it any wonder that the Tammany leaders, the shrewdest practical psychologists on earth, refuse to worry?

FREE speech is defended forcefully and eloquently by President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University in his new collection of speeches, "Looking Forward" (Scribner's). It happened by some regrettable accident that the book was published almost simultaneously with the expulsion of Reed Harris, the student editor of The Columbia Spectator. But let us forget the Harris affair and listen instead to Dr. Butler's inspiring words:

> . . . it appears that liberalism is a hard lesson to learn. Liberty as a personal possession may be highly acclaimed, while liberty as an institution for the protection of all men may at the same moment be violently, even passionately, attacked. . . . Those who continue to manifest this zest to persecute are out of touch with the march of progress . . . are flying in the face of the fundamental principles of that American political philosophy to which they give such voluble lip service. It would be an interesting bit of scientific inquiry to ascertain whether that hypocrisy which is just now so widespread among our people is an act, an achievement or a habit. . . . "Give me the liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely according to conscience,

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> doctrine and the only doctrine upon which free government and free society can rest. . . . Proscriptions, blacklists, demands that individuals be deprived of posts of honor and emolument because of their lack of conformity to some more or less outrageous law or doctrine . . . are all vestigial remains of that older and widespread habit of persecution which is now so happily on the wane.
>
> The lingering zest to persecute is a challenge to the twentieth-century university. In the university at least there is freedom to seek the truth and to proclaim it as found or believed, provided only it be done with scholarly competence, sincerity and good manners. The university becomes in this way the ideal community where men and women move in an atmosphere of freedom, enjoy the stimulus of difference of opinion and view, and gain the inspiration which only the honest and earnest seeker after truth ever really knows.

This is great stuff. We like it, we eat it up, we subscribe to it at least 100 percent. But so, for his own misfortune, did young Mr. Harris.

TWO world citizens were taken by death last week: Julia Lathrop, first head of the Children's Bureau of the United States government, and Sir Patrick Geddes, British biologist, city planner, thinker and writer. Of Miss Lathrop, whom Jane Addams called "one of the most useful women of the whole country," there is little to add to what is already widely known. Much less familiar to Americans was Sir Patrick Geddes, a man of rare abilities, who evaded the limelight for reasons that went deep into his character, but was none the less significant because he lived by preference in comparative obscurity. J. A. Hobson called him "one of the great thinkers and writers of our age," and Lewis Mumford, in the course of a sketch of his career in The New Republic of October 30, 1929, spoke of him as "one of the half-dozen seminal thinkers of our time." There is no sense of tragedy in his passing, for he was seventy-eight years old, and most of his work was done. It is sufficient in his case to note simply, "Here was a great man, and now he is dead."

SOME seventy-five power experts assembled a week ago in New York, at a "round-table conference on regulation" called by Morris Llewellyn Cooke, a well known engineer. The group included economists, engineers, lawyers, political scientists, business men, journalists, publicists—and half a dozen members of regulatory commissions, federal and state. No person connected with a utility was invited. For two days existing regulatory practices, financial manipulation by holding companies, the role of the courts and other pressing aspects of the power problem were discussed. While divergences of opinion on details were exhibited, general like-mindedness on the need for thoroughgoing reform in the public interest was manifest. A policy committee drew up a 2,000-word report the preamble of which declared:

> Regulation, as now generally administered, has failed to protect investors in public-utility securities against the loss of billions of dollars resulting from unsound methods of valuation and financing. It has failed to obtain for the small consumer rate reductions corresponding to the decline in prices and wages. . . . It has failed also to safeguard the credit of the companies. . . .

The report then added some valid recommendations consonant with the discussions. Thereupon the members of the regulatory commissions developed a sudden timidity, declared their embarrassment not merely at signing that—or any other—report, but at having such a report even presented to a conference in which they had participated. Out of deference for their "delicate" positions as officials, the conference voted to accept the report without expressing either approval or disapproval, and specifying that the commissioners had dissociated themselves from any conclusions formulated. The episode illuminates the pressure upon such regulatory machinery as exists, and how tight a grip the "power trust" has obtained on federal and state administrations. Increasingly thoughtful and objective-minded students are forced to the conclusion that regulation cannot succeed, given the tremendous financial stake in its failure and the effective use of the consumers' dollars to circumvent and defeat every attempt to give consumer and investor the "square deal" which the widely broadcast power propaganda proclaims as the major objective of the public utilities.

NINE of the Harlan, Kentucky, strikers who face the electric chair under the charge of "conspiracy to murder" won a temporary victory recently when their cases were remanded back to the Harlan court. Previously they had faced the danger of being tried by a jury of Clark County farmers, whose deep-seated prejudice against Negroes and miners would probably have vitiated any efforts in behalf of a fair trial. It seems, however, that Judge Shackelford, who sustained the motion to remand the case, was not so eager to safeguard the interests of the accused miners as he was to protect the interests of the taxpayers of Clark County; they would have been obliged to carry the costs of the trial if it had taken place in their local court. Judge Shackelford's decision was bitterly fought by Joseph B. Snyder, the special prosecutor, who would much rather have the miners tried in an antagonistic district and in one where the defense would be placed under the obligation of transporting witnesses more than two hundred miles over mountain roads. The trials will come up in May. Further efforts will doubtless be made by the prosecution to obtain another change of venue, but even if it is not granted, the Harlan miners accused of first-degree murder are still in grave danger of being railroaded to jail in

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the operator-controlled courts of Harlan County itself.

THE case of Edward Walters is essentially that of a man kept in prison because he claims to be innocent. Walters, an ex-convict who had married, worked hard and become the owner of a prosperous barber shop in New York City, was convicted in 1927 of stealing a few dollars' worth of second-hand clothes from a dry cleaner. He received the disproportionate sentence of twenty years—because, as the trial judge explained some years later to Mr. Albert F. Coyle, "he was impertinent to me in court." Mr. Coyle, who had interested himself in the case, asked in what way Walters had been impertinent. The judge answered "that when he told Walters to stand up and plead guilty, Mr. Walters stood up and told him that he was not guilty and refused to make such a plea." During the same interview, the judge promised Mr. Coyle that he would request the Governor to cut Walters' sentence in half if Walters would sign a statement pleading guilty to the charge and asking for clemency. This Walters refused to do; and he again declared his innocence last August, when he made a plea to the Parole Board. Mr. J. W. Moore, the chairman of the Board, wrote to him as follows: "I may state frankly that if your plea had been made upon the basis that the sentence was excessive, it would have received some sympathy and probably recommendation. You have selected, however, to insist upon an endeavor to convince the Board of your absolute innocence, and in this you have not succeeded." To a disinterested observer, reading the trial records and noting the conflicting testimony on which he was convicted, it seems quite likely that Walters is right—that he was arrested and "framed" for a crime of which he knew nothing. But the question of his guilt or innocence is relatively less important than another question which rises not in his case alone, but in dozens of other cases in which authorities refuse to admit the possibility of their having made an error. Here is a man now beginning his sixth year in Sing Sing for stealing a bundle of old clothes. Everybody connected with the case, including the trial judge himself, agrees that the sentence of twenty years was excessive. All twelve jurors who convicted him have joined in a petition that he be released from further imprisonment. Yet there is a good chance that Walters will spend fifteen more years in Sing Sing for the crime—not recognized under our present laws—of obstinately proclaiming that he is innocent. Fifteen years for telling a lie is pretty stiff punishment—especially if it should turn out, as seems quite possible, that Walters isn't lying after all.

MANY readers of The New Republic are doubtless familiar with the magazine called The Unemployed, published by the League for Industrial Democracy. This paper, which appears now and then, is intended to assist some of America's millions of unemployed, who have been acting as distributing agents, selling it on the streets and earning a fairly decent livelihood by doing so. All the editorial work has been without remuneration, and the unemployed man who takes copies for resale risks nothing, since he is permitted to return all those left over. The magazine has been distributed in about sixty cities, and the number of salesmen has been as high as fifty in New York, with proportionate numbers elsewhere. Now, however, the future of the periodical is gravely jeopardized because of persecution by the police, in New York and other cities. The Unemployed, not unnaturally, includes in its contents discussion of the business depression, its causes and possible cures, and men like Harry Emerson Fosdick, Norman Thomas, Stuart Chase, Paul Blanshard and W. M. Leiserson have discussed this theme in its pages. The police, apparently acting on a Hooverian theory that hard times will go away if people just stop talking about them, make a point of arresting the unemployed sellers of The Unemployed and bringing them into court. Sometimes they are fined, or sentenced to jail, but more often the judge dismisses the case. Nevertheless, these guerrilla tactics have had their effect. If The Unemployed suspends publication, the men who have been selling it will again be out of work, and thanks to the police, the theme of the magazine will be more appropriate than ever.

Demagogues and Plutagogues

WHEN Alfred E. Smith called Franklin D. Roosevelt a demagogue, he used the kind of terms and the kind of logic which might have emanated from Mr. Mellon, President Hoover, Secretary Ogden Mills or any conservative supporter of the administration. As he did so, there rallied behind him all the influential Republican newspapers and that faction of his own party which wants the Democratic organization to become the successor of the Republican by enticing away the same business and financial interests which the Republican party has for many years tried faithfully to serve. The importance of the attack lay not in its content, but in the illumination which the attack threw upon the existing political situation.

We do not attach undue importance to the words themselves. Everyone who knows anything about the currents of politics knows that Mr. Smith has long nourished a sense of pique against Mr. Roosevelt, and that he would do almost anything to stop his nomination. This hostility goes beneath reason and debate; it is one of those emotional poisons which so often burrow in the flesh of a man accustomed to action and power, who happens for the time being to be confined to inaction, to be a spectator of the deeds of an-

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other. Mr. Smith has himself proposed anti-depression measures in the interest of the common man which the administration has turned down—such as a large public-works program to be financed by borrowing. It is quite conceivable that if Mr. Roosevelt, instead of attacking the administration's policy of relieving the rich but not the poor, had assumed the opposite position, Mr. Smith would have said that he would take off his coat to fight any candidate who did not put the interests of the common man above the interests of the bankers. In either case he would not have been discussing seriously the question whether there is a class struggle and whether the Democrats ought to take one side of it or the other; he would have been simply trying to stop Roosevelt.

Nevertheless, it is significant that Mr. Smith has become so intimately associated with men of wealth that he does not feel strongly the wide disparity of interests which exists in the country today. It is significant that the party group with which he is affiliated is trying to play down any hostility to the rich and any radical measures which might change the existing way of running affairs, the distribution of wealth and power. It is significant that the main line of their endeavor is to win success for their candidates by becoming better Republicans than the Republicans themselves. The fact that Mr. Smith could have argued in this way, even as the result of personal enmity, is one more piece of evidence that the existing two-party system is a hollow show, as far as any difference of political and economic philosophy is concerned.

It is obvious that the prevailing opinion among those in power is the same in depression as it was in prosperity—that our system of conducting economic life must be preserved and enhanced without fundamental change, and that the way to preserve and enhance it is to care, first of all, for the interests of those who pile up and invest capital. In the conflicts about taxation, about electric power, about the other principal subjects of debate before the crash of 1929, the respectable argument was that the continuance of prosperity depended on the accumulation of large amounts of private capital and the preservation of freedom in its use.

Precisely the same dogma has persisted in every step of the anti-depression program. The first opinion was that business must be left free to find its own way out, and that taxes must not be increased. The next was that, though the government must act, it must not act to relieve the unemployed or to furnish more employment, but merely to protect the values of securities, to prevent bankruptcies and capital liquidation, to enlarge the sources of credit which private enterprise might employ for renewed activity. This line of thought prompted the National Credit Corporation, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Glass-Steagall bill, the sales tax, the hostility to higher income and estate taxes, and reduction of federal expenses. At the same time, it blocked any substantial borrowing for a public-works program, it blocked federal relief of the unemployed, the installation of a national system of employment exchanges and unemployment insurance.

Rarely has a fundamental issue of policy and outlook been more clearly defined; rarely has a better opportunity been offered to an opposition to illuminate the issue and take a position of protest, buttressed by a constructive program based on a different philosophy. Mr. Roosevelt made a small and tentative beginning at this task, only to be denounced as a demagogue by an influential section of his own party. In his St. Paul speech he might have accepted the challenge flatly, pointed out the genuine differences of interest among the classes, and rounded out the philosophy and the economic policy on the basis of which it is desirable to espouse the cause of the common man. But though he defended himself, he did so weakly, on the basis that there really is no conflict of interest. He declared the need for a more fundamental policy, threw out a few words about social-economic planning, and illustrated what he had in mind by discussing the issues of electric power and the tariff. Nevertheless, it was a speech meant to heal the breach rather than to clarify it and emphasize the deep gulf which it creates between two opposing attitudes toward the common life.

We do not, of course, want demagogues. But what is a demagogue? From the utterances on the subject which this incident has stimulated in the conservative press, one might suppose that anyone sincerely concerned about the interest of the great and impecunious majority, anyone who proposed to use this interest as the criterion of collective policy and place it above the interest of any minority, is a demagogue. But a demagogue is not a leader of the people, he is a misleader of them. Is it misleading the people to tell them that the self-seeking of the rich has not brought happiness to the United States and is not likely to do so? Is it misleading the people to tell them that we need, not more concentration of private wealth and more investment, but rather a less unequal distribution of wealth and more popular purchasing power to keep busy our immense existing productive capacity? The real demagogue is rather the politician who, like those now in power, keeps on pretending and saying, in spite of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that if government takes care of the rich, the rich will take care of all the rest of us.

Perhaps it is just as well, however, that Mr. Roosevelt has not used this occasion to sharpen the issue with Mr. Smith and the group about him. For the battle is not one of words; it really concerns what will be [illegible]

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in power. And it is absurd to suppose that any party so largely dominated by persons who agree with Mr. Smith on this issue, a party dependent to so great a degree on the financial and moral support of the selfsame interests which have been directing affairs under the present administration, would really act in a very different way if it achieved office, no matter what its candidate might say during the campaign. Mr. Roosevelt has veered in the right direction, but even if he proceeded less feebly in his words, it is improbable that as a Democratic President he could go far in his deeds. Perhaps even a greater danger to the common man would have developed if, as a result of Mr. Smith's attack, Mr. Roosevelt had been made to appear what he is not—a great and forceful champion of popular justice.

The Supreme Court and a Balanced Budget

FOREIGNERS are fond of calling us the land of paradoxes. Our public finances certainly justify that characterization. The richest country in the world has been the most dilatory in balancing its budget and appears the most distracted and embarrassed in attaining that end. The fundamental explanation, of course, is the systematically inculcated hostility to the taxation of wealth. For ten years the press has sedulously repeated the Mellon doctrine that the immunity of the rich from taxation is a blessing for the poor. In times of prosperity appropriate taxes upon bloated incomes would discourage enterprise; in days of adversity there are no bloated incomes. That the Democratic party also should have succumbed so largely to this Mellon philosophy is bound to amuse the future historian of post-war America. But he will be more amazed than amused when he discovers that in the third year of the depression the official "patriotic," "nonpartisan" effort to balance the budget was largely directed toward the imposition of consumption taxes.

Therefore, it ought not to be too surprising that this deep-seated sentiment against the taxation of wealth should be shared by members of our Supreme Court. And how easily private notions of economic or social policy are transmuted into constitutional dogma is too amply proved by the reports of the Supreme Court, particularly since the War. Enormous wealth has been withdrawn from the taxing power of nation and states on the gossamer claim that otherwise governmental instrumentalities would be defeated. The history of taxation is to no small extent a battle of wits between skill in devising taxes and astuteness in evading their incidence. By creating constitutional obstructions to effective safeguards against highly profitable evasions [illegible] the Constitution at the disposal of evaders. A few years ago the Supreme Court sheltered great wealth by interposing the benevolent due-process clause on behalf of rich donors who made gifts in anticipation of revenue measures especially designed for them. It did so by inventing a new doctrine of retroactivity which ran counter to the fiscal history of western countries, including our own. And "due process" was made to forbid such retroactivity. One would suppose that the Supreme Court would at least be friendly to the effective enforcement of the estate tax. The social justification of that tax has become an accepted postulate even of our individualistic society. Not yet does it meet sympathetic consideration from the Supreme Court. And so the other day, the Court, again under the blessed versatility of "due process," nullified the attempt of Congress, in response to the compelling experience of the Treasury Department, to prevent gross evasions of the estate tax.

From the original enactment of the estate-tax law in 1916, it was realized that a single tax on estates could be too easily avoided by well timed and astute disposition of property before death. To check such practices, the act of 1916 contained two safeguards. Gifts made "in contemplation of death," and those in which the donor retained a joint interest during his lifetime, were taxed as part of his estate at death. But other means remained by which property might be withdrawn from the operation of the tax and yet remain within the effective control of the donor; he might, for example, place it in trust with a power of revocation or control reserved in himself. The possibility of escape by this device was materially reduced by the act of 1918, which taxed gifts, by way of trust, taking effect "in possession or enjoyment" at the time of the donor's death. The courts threatened the effectiveness of much of this legislation by technical and sterile definitions of "possession or enjoyment," and only last year Congress was forced to close a broad avenue of escape from the estate tax by making specific provision for the inclusion of property which is transferred on trust for another but from which the income is reserved for the donor during his life.

Meanwhile, the tax authorities were beset by difficulties growing out of the vague phrase "in contemplation of death." To what degree the donor must have apprehended his end, and how to prove that apprehension, were questions which made the collection of a tax precarious at best. The devil himself, the lawyers are fond of quoting, knoweth not the mind of man; and even if he did, the devil's advocate might experience considerable difficulty in proving it to a court of law. Realizing that the limited omniscience of the taxing authorities was finding it impossible to isolate successfully those gifts that were made "in contemplation of death," Congress in 1924 imposed a tax on all gifts, irrespective of date or motive, at rates equal to those

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under the estate tax. This general gift tax was upheld by the Supreme Court. In addition, the tax on gifts made in contemplation of death was retained, giving the government a second string to its bow, although of course credit was allowed where a gift tax had already been paid on the transfer.

The arm of the government was strengthened, moreover, by requiring the representatives of the estate to prove, where the gift was within two years of death, that it was not in contemplation thereof. But this shift of the burden of proof was of little value to the government in a contest against an elderly man of wealth contemplating death with one eye and the tax law with the other. The gift tax itself promised better results, but in 1926 it was repealed. Congress, however, was alive to the need of conserving the gain which the gift tax had made in the enforcement of the estate tax. Ten years' experience in administering the revenue acts had taught its lesson. Congress provided that gifts made within two years of death should be "deemed to have been made in contemplation of death," and so might be assessed under the estate tax. "The inclusion of this provision," reported the Ways and Means Committee of the House, "will prevent most of the evasion and is the only way in which it can be prevented." This is the provision which the Supreme Court now declares unconstitutional. Again "due process" worked its charm on behalf of wealth.

In thus setting at naught the considered effort of Congress to obtain a really effective tax on decedents' estates, a majority of the Court found the provision arbitrary and unreasonable because it might apply to gifts made with no thought of death or taxes. "The young man in abounding health," writes Mr. Justice Sutherland, "bereft of life by a stroke of lightning within two years after making a gift, is conclusively presumed to have acted under the inducement of the thought of death, equally with the old and ailing who already stands in the shadow of the inevitable." The pity aroused by this affecting apparition of the benevolent young plutocrat is somewhat mollified by the fact that if the property had not been given to kith or kin—for gifts to charity are exempted—so shortly before the donor's untimely end, it would in all likelihood have passed by will and been taxed accordingly.

The apparition fades completely before the picture drawn by Mr. Justice Stone in a dissenting opinion, in which he was joined by Mr. Justice Brandeis. (Mr. Justice Cardozo did not sit in the case.) This opinion reveals graphically by whom these gifts are made, and with what effect on the operation of the taxing system. Mr. Justice Stone analyzes one hundred and two cases in which the government and the decedent's estate engaged in litigation over the question whether a gift had been made "in contemplation of death," under the law as it existed before the 1926 provision.

> In twenty cases involving gifts of approximately $4,250,000, the government was successful. In three it was partially successful; and in seventy-eight involving gifts largely in excess of $120,000,000, it was unsuccessful. In another the jury disagreed.
>
> In fifty-six of the total of seventy-eight cases decided against the government, the gifts were made within two years of death. In this group of fifty-six donors, two were more than ninety years of age at the time of death; ten were between eighty and ninety; twenty-seven were between seventy and eighty; six were between sixty and seventy; six were between fifty and sixty; and only one was younger than fifty. There was one gift of $46,000,000 made within two months of death by a donor seventy-one years of age at death; one of $36,790,000 made by a donor over eighty, who consulted a tax expert before making the gift; one of over $10,400,000 made by a donor aged seventy-six, six months before death; and one by a donor aged seventy-five at death, in which the tax assessed was over $1,000,000. There was one other in excess of $2,000,000; five others largely in excess of $1,000,000; four others in excess of $500,000; thirteen in excess of $250,000; and fourteen in excess of $100,000. The value of the gifts was not shown definitely in three cases; twelve involved gifts totaling less than $100,000. In the remaining twenty-two cases the gifts were made more than two years before the death of the donor.

This decision does not touch technical issues that are in the special province of learned judges. How taxes are evaded and how fine a net must be woven to prevent big fish from escaping, what the experience of a decade of federal-estates administration indicated and what means are adopted in the end that there be not wholesale evasion—these are matters which tax administrators, members of the Ways and Means Committee, students of public finance, are as competent to understand as are Mr. Justice Sutherland and his brethren. Is it not the plain truth that Mr. Justice Stone's powerful opinion deals with actualities and demolishes the hollow fabric of unreality erected by the majority? And if it be the truth, the Supreme Court has its duty toward a balanced budget—it ought not to sanctify gross tax evasion by the rich nor call the word-spinning by which it does so the Constitution.

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How the Short Selling Game Works

WHAT DID the Senate Committee expect Mr. Richard Whitney, president of the Stock Exchange, to tell them about short selling? What does Mr. Whitney know about it? What does anybody know about it? The buying and selling of stocks is one of the most important operations in our present economic system. Yet all the fundamental facts about it are locked up in the private files of a small private association and there is no way in which anybody or any student of our intricate and disordered economic life can find out anything about the subject save by permission of this small private association. What the public needs, what the Senate needs, are facts about short selling and security trading, not the opinions of Mr. Whitney or anybody else. And it is high time we began to get those facts.

Mr. Whitney has given it as his opinion that short selling is essential to a balanced market. Before the Senate Committee last week he advanced various statements in support of this, but all mere statements. I cannot notice all of them here. But I would like to fix attention on one of them. Mr. Whitney has repeated over and over again that old, threadbare and generally accepted assertion that short selling's chief value is that it acts as a cushion to check violent stock-market declines. Mr. Whitney proclaims this frequently. Wall Street financial writers repeat it weekly. Even some economists who know absolutely nothing about the subject poll-parrot it without any other basis for the statement than the authority of Wall Street financial writers.

The statement is not true. The facts are almost the very reverse. But the general acceptance of this hoary and preposterous morsel of pure bunk is a perfect example of what you can accomplish by continual and incessant repetition. There was something pitiful about the spectacle of the Senate Committee sitting in helpless silence, floundering in the vast stretches of its own ignorance, as President Whitney droned for the twentieth time this year this utterly unsupported claim without offering a single fact.

Here I will offer two instances of a short-selling operation—one to illustrate the alleged effect of short sales to support the market in a decline, the other to illustrate the effect which a short-selling drive can have on a stock. I do not deal with the question of whether short selling is responsible for our present business plight, a claim which I think as ridiculous as Whitney's defense of short selling—a claim, by the way, invented by "Alibi" Herbert to explain why all his funny medicine has had no effect upon his patient. My own view is that wild margin trading on the long side is as bad as, if not worse than, short selling. I do not, however, dis-

I

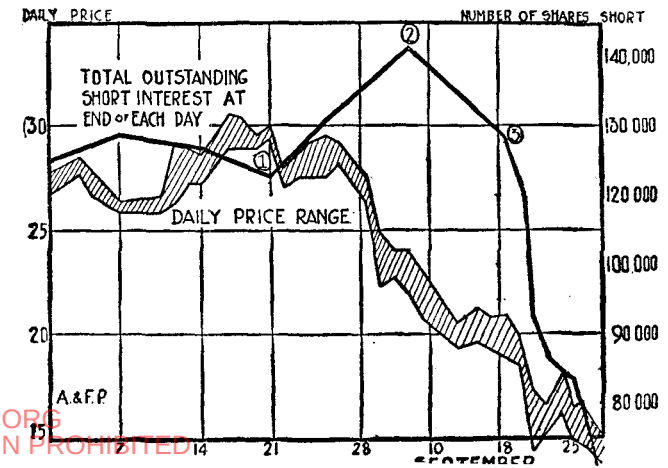
First let us deal with Chart Number 1. The theory is that the man who sells short must ultimately buy enough stocks to cover his short sale. Therefore, as long as he is short he is a potential buyer. He will buy when stocks start to fall. He will thus provide an actual demand and to that extent help to break the force of the fall in prices.

To put the matter in concrete form: about August 20 of last year the short interest in American and Foreign Power was 122,000 shares. That is to say, on that day there were stock speculators who had sold in the aggregate 122,000 shares of American and Foreign Power stock and had not yet covered. They were waiting for the stock to drop in price to cover. In theory there were, therefore, stock speculators who were in a position where they would have to buy 122,000 shares of that stock. At the moment when the stock might fall for any reason, they would promptly step in and buy. To that extent, therefore, they would support the market—check the decline—act as a cushion to break the force of the fall.

Now it will very readily be seen that this theory depends for its validity upon many factors, one of which is that the shorts will step in to buy these 122,000 shares *when the price of the stock begins to fall.* That is quite plain. But if they do not step in, obviously the theory fails. These shorts have it in their power to check the decline in price. But *are they really interested in checking the decline?* The lower the price goes, the lower the price at which they will buy it and the greater will be their profits. Are they not, therefore, moved by every consideration *not to step in,* but to withhold their buying power until the price sinks as low as possible?

Now then let us examine this particular case—the short interest in American and Foreign Power

CHART NO. 1



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Company. To do this I have made a chart depicting the movement of prices and sales. The chart displays a picture of the market for this stock from August 1 to September 30, 1931. I will ask the reader to study very carefully all the portions of the chart and then follow the explanation given below.

First follow the shaded line. It marks the daily price range of American and Foreign Power Company common stock. It gives the high and low for each day. The figures running down the left of the chart refer to the price of the stock. It will be seen that the shares on August 1 ranged between 26⅝ and 27¾. The stock declined a few points during the next ten days, then rose to a high of 30⅝. Then the price broke and during the next six weeks settled to a low of 12¾.

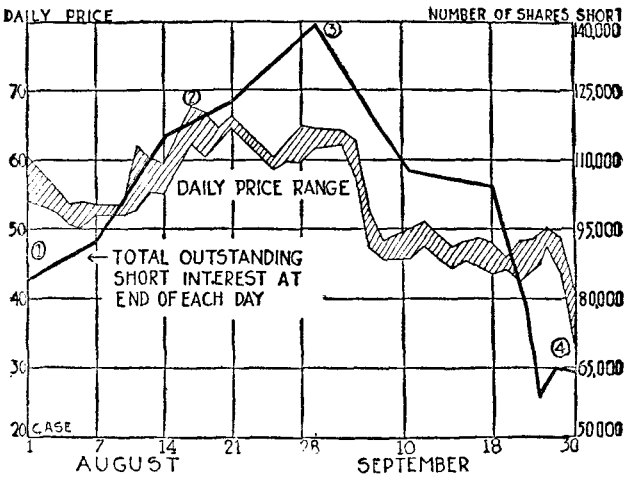
Second, having carefully studied that price line, observe the black line which depicts the movement of the short interest. The figures at the right of the chart indicate the number of shares in the short interest. It will be seen that on August 1 the short interest was 125,000 shares. In other words, there were speculators in the market who had sold that many shares short and had not yet covered. If we follow this line up to the nineteenth we will see that the short interest first increased a little and then decreased a little, while the price was moving within a range of ten points. Here it is important to note that at the point on the chart marked (1) the short interest amounted to 122,700 shares.

Now follow what happens. The price of the stock breaks near the point marked (1). It starts down hesitantly at first for a week, steadies a little, and then dives down precipitately to the end of the chart.

The theory is that as the stock breaks and starts to decline those shorts will come in to buy 122,000 shares. It is at this point marked (1) that the short interest is supposed to step in and support the market. Here certainly is where it should function. But do the shorts come in and buy? They certainly do not. You will see that from August 21 to September 11 the line representing the short interest rises. That means the short interest is getting larger, that those shorts, instead of rushing in and buying 122,000 shares to support the market, rush in and sell more. In other words, they do precisely what you would expect them to do. They withhold their buying power to permit the price to sink. They sell more to help it to sink. To state the matter differently: they not only held out of operation the 122,000 shares already short, but increased the short interest another 19,000 shares to a total of 141,600 in the few weeks up to September 11. By this time the price had sunk to a low for the day of 22. This point is indicated on the chart by the figure (2).

At this point some of the shorts begin to cover. Follow the black line down to the figure (3) at September 19. By that date the 19,000 short sales began to decline have been covered. But it will be observed that at that point (3) the short interest is still 122,000 shares, or just where it was when the decline started. In other words, the short interest in existence when the decline started has not, more than a month later, liquidated a single share. They did not begin to liquidate until September 19, when the price had sunk to 19. As a matter of fact, liquidation was not complete September 30, when the price had slumped to 12¾. At that point (4) there were still 75,000 short shares that had not yet come in to cover.

Chart No. 2



It will be seen that when the shorts did finally come in to cover, the decline in the price was not stopped. Why was this? Of course it may be urged that had the shorts not come in the price might have gone still lower. This is a pure guess. It is not a guess, however, that they did not come in until the price had slumped about 33 percent, and that at the end of six weeks, when the price had been cut in half, over 60 percent of the shorts still had not covered.

And why did the stock keep sinking in price even after covering started? The reason is quite obvious. Because by this time the wave of selling had rolled up such vigor and virulence that it could not be halted. This illustrates a well known fact about short selling, that the so-called cushioning power is never so effective as its depressive power. Up to the early part of September, sales of this stock had ranged between 7,000 and 18,000 shares a day. After that sales became heavier; they were nearer 35,000 shares a day. This was the precise point at which the market needed the support of the shorts, yet it was at this point that they added to the selling instead of to the buying.

On the twenty-first they began to cover. Why? Because on the twenty-first England went off the gold standard and the New York Stock Exchange, to avoid closing, issued a rule prohibiting all short selling. To the shorts, or at least to many of them, despite the wave of selling orders which it was

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face of one of the most disturbing and depressive events of the year, this meant that the decline might be halted. It was a verdict by a large section of the shorts that it was short selling which was driving down American and Foreign Power stock and so they rushed in to cover. If the Exchange had not temporarily suspended short selling is there any reason to believe these shorts would have come in then? As a matter of fact, the suspension of short selling was brief, and so speculators who were short 75,000 shares stayed out of the market and failed to use their buying power, and of course the stock continued to collapse. The balance of the short interest was not liquidated for months.

Why does not the Senate Committee ask Mr. Whitney to supply the names of the brokers who reported a large short interest in the shares of stock; then summon those brokers and compel them to give the names of the men who hammered American and Foreign Power?

II

If the Senate Committee wants some real information about what short selling can do, let it direct Mr. Whitney to deliver the names of the brokers who reported a large short interest in the shares of the Case (J. I.) Company in August and September. The history of this operation is depicted in Chart No. 2.

First, it must be remembered that there are only 195,000 shares of Case common. Yet up to August 1, 1931, speculators had sold 83,965 shares short and had not yet covered. Here was a short interest equal to almost half of all the outstanding shares. By August 7 this had grown to 93,200. It increased each week until on August 28 it had reached 139,600 shares. In other words, the speculators had sold 71 percent of the entire issue of the stock short.

Now study the chart. On August 1 (1) there was outstanding a short interest of 83,965 shares. The price of the stock stood at 60 (high for the day). It declined a little but recovered and rose during the next two weeks to 67⅝. But all this time more and more shares were being sold short. By the eighteenth (2) the short interest was about 120,000 shares, or more than 60 percent of the whole issue. Could a stock price be expected to stand up under such hammering? Of course it broke (on the eighteenth) and thereafter continued to decline with brief rallies until the end of September, when it reached a low of 38½—a drop from 60 in eight weeks. When the stock broke on the eighteenth and started to decline did the shorts come in and cover? They continued to sell short for another ten days. Then they proceeded to cover (3). During the next month these shorts had to go into the market and buy. They actually bought 75,000 shares. But this was not enough to prevent the stock from continuing its decline until at the end of September, when the price was down to 38½, there were still outstanding 65,000 shares in the short interest which had never covered.

What did short selling do to this stock? Would it not be worth investigating this little adventure? Who was making all these sales? When these gentlemen came to cover, where did all the stock come from to fill their orders without sending the price up? Who were they? Let the Committee summon the brokers who handled the accounts and ask for this information. Order Mr. Whitney to produce their names.

While the shorts were hammering this stock all through August and the first half of September, the sales every week exceeded the whole number of shares outstanding, and some weeks exceeded it by 100 percent. Here are the sales by weeks of the shares of a company whose outstanding stock was only 195,000 shares:

August	3	288,600 shares
	10	213,000
	17	428,000
	24	432,000
	31	382,000
Sept.	7	310,000
	14	204,000
	21	348,000

There is something here that ought to be cleared up and the Committee can do it, not by summoning Mr. Whitney and permitting him to lecture the Committee in general terms, but by asking for the names of the men who carried on this little game.

We are able to follow these transactions because for the first time in history we have been permitted to have a peep, just a mere peep covering a few months, into the operations of the Exchange. This was made possible by the report on daily short sales made by the Exchange, covering the period from May to November. Even this is far from complete. What the public needs, what the Senate needs, is more light on this whole business of security trading. The Senate Committee has a resolution from the Senate authorizing it to make a study of the whole subject. Is it going to make a farce of that resolution? Is it going to refuse to make the investigation? I believe that if it will proceed properly it will reveal for us the most important economic information we have been able to obtain in a generation.

It will not be difficult if the investigation is in the hands of someone who knows his way round Wall Street. The names of brokerage houses which are generally supposed to have handled large short accounts are pretty well known there. So are the names of the operators. I will here suggest a few names. Let the Committee summon the firm of Prentice and Slepack. Let them call Mr. Percy Rockefeller, a director of the National City Bank, and Mr. Matthew Brush. These gentlemen could give some information that would be definite.

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The Collapse of a Romance

CARLYLE, who was a romantic, called political economy the dismal science. And it is true that the roseate hopes of the earlier economists had well nigh disappeared by his day. Ricardo had indicated that there was not enough land to go around and Malthus that that there were altogether too many people. Natural laws seemed to doom many to live on the edge of the subsistence line. In the United States, however, for fairly obvious reasons the earlier glow revived and business was ordained as the great romantic adventure.

Although the rebirth of glamor was dependent upon local American conditions, there was a genuinely romantic factor in economic theory; we did not create the romanticism, we only gave it the chance to flourish. Strange as it sounds, the economic man was himself a hero of romance. Of course another branch of the romantic tradition did not consider him as such; he figures there as withdrawing from the realm of romance into the counting room, there to engage in a prosaic grubbing into musty ledgers. But different romanticists rarely understand one another, and while the earlier tradition tended to prevail in the books, the new romantic spirit took possession of the scene of action.

The new hero of romance did not seek justification for himself in theory; the adventure was its own justification. But if he had turned to economic theory he would have found written warrant. For, in that theory, wants and desires were glorified power; at their magic touch the world was to be transformed; they were, when unshackled from legal artifice and political despotism, the sure source of prosperity and continual progress; the earthly savior of mankind. Wants stirred man to energy, rendered him creative, moved him to thrift and produced the embellishment of the world, urged him to exchange and so made man, apart from his will, the mutual servant of his fellows. The romance of business did not stop there. Economic man had another asset beside his desires; he had an unfailing intelligence which showed him just how to direct the energy, thrift, exchange, by which in satisfying his wants he made the world over. To the eye of the romantic who lived in the genteel literary tradition, this ascription of self-sufficient rationality seemed the negation of romance. How could adventure be cool, calculating, concerned with debtor and creditor accounts, and still be romantic?

But it was just at this point that the new romanticism of business so cleverly came in. Human imagination had never before conceived anything so fantastic as the idea that every individual is actuated in all his desires by an insight into just what is good for him, and that he is equipped with the sure foresight which will enable him to calculate ahead and get just what he is after. Nor did the imaginative flight pause with this conclusion. All the work of the world, from the most ordinary to the most extraordinary, is presided over by this omnipresent deity of calculating reason, who through his uniform presence in each separate individual is summed up by integral calculus into a virtually omniscient mind. Through its beneficent and overruling power, self-interest becomes a social lubricant instead of a cause of friction, and the zeal of each one to get ahead of everybody else promotes the general welfare. If there are those who seem to be left out of its distribution, there is always the assurance that the ways of Providence are proverbially mysterious.

It is characteristic of romance, of the glamorous and imaginative projection of excited emotion, to remain outside the sphere of argument. One is either inside the romance or outside it. It is true and is the standard of truth, if you are inside; it is silly or insane, if you are outside. Thus, when one says that the present world crisis is merely the consequence of the general acceptance of the particular romance which has gone by the name of business, one speaks from the outside. It is commonly assumed that the explanation of the economic crisis must be itself economic. So it must—if one stays inside the business dream. Since it is part of the dream that cool, far-sighted intelligence controls the operation of the energies and instruments by which desires are satisfied, one within the dream must seek for a rational explanation. From outside the romance, that fact itself gives the key to the explanation; we cannot call gambling an exercise of cool and calm rationality without sooner or later tripping up.

The dictionary defines gambling as staking money on some fortuitous event. Since business is in the condition it is, since it has brought about a state of universal insecurity, it is fairly evident that the bets have gone wrong. But more fundamental still is the fact to which the present insecurity testifies. As the function of intelligent control is to achieve order, stability, security, the whole theory of the relation between business and calculating intelligence is evidently sheer fiction. Business postulates insecurity and uncertainty. It thrives on it and increasingly creates it, in order that more business may be done.

If the existing insecurity were localized in one country or restricted to one class, some explanation of it might be found or invented which would be consistent with a definition of the economic process as a rationally guided process of satisfying wants. There would also then be

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financiers and industrial leaders for their stupidity in bringing us to this pass. But since the essence of the whole thing is the romance of adventuring on the sea of uncertainty, one might as well subject Don Quixote to criticism on the basis of reason. Because wagering on uncertainty is the heart of the whole process, the banker, as insecure as the debtor, has ceased to function; the manufacturer is as doubtful of a market for his goods as the worker is of a market for his labor and the farmer for his products. That "securities" are now so largely insecurities is typical of the whole affair.

The present scene is only an exhibition of what is inherent in business all the time, but it now happens on such a scale that the uncertainty always characteristic of it has become too overt to be ignored. The only thing abnormal about it is that the normal insecurity has got out of hand to the extent that it cannot be concealed from general recognition. In other words, the essentially romantic nature of the idea that business is a rational way of expending energy for the satisfaction of human wants becomes apparent to those who have eyes to see. There are various "rational" explanations of the present breakdown. Each has its measure of truth, but all they explain is some aspect of the irrationality, the trading on uncertainty, which is business itself.

It is interesting to note the ways in which a recognition of the identity of business with betting on an uncertain event all but explicitly comes through. We hear every day and many times a day that everything would be all right if we only had "confidence." Undoubtedly. But confidence in what or in whom? The industrialist would be pleased if the banker had enough confidence to lend him money; the banker would be pleased if someone else had sufficient confidence to buy his frozen assets at a good price; the farmer would love to have confidence that if he plants a lot of grain and cotton he will get a good price next summer; the laborer would like to have confidence that he is going to get a job, and the depositor that he is going to get his money from the bank when he wants it. Meantime, the appeal to confidence sounds like a confidence game. Can anyone imagine anything more humorous—if it were not terribly tragic—than the appeal to put confidence in a situation of complete insecurity? Again we are constantly told that the whole basis of modern business is credit. What does that signify when credit tends automatically toward inflation and the only way to deflate is to withold credit, except that the whole business of business is to trade on insecurity, concealing the insecurity as long as possible by an ingenious pyramiding of it?

The psychology and morale of business are based on trading in insecurity. They are criticized by serious moralists as if the animating spirit were that of acquisition. These accusations do not reach the mark. Business is a game which cannot be carried on without acquisition, any more than poker [illegible] of course add to the security of existence. As a matter of fact it is something else. It is a medium of exchange. Well, if it were, it would ment of the game which counts; acquisition is important because it enables the game to go on at a more furious pitch. We hunt the dollar, but hunting is hunting, not dollars. It is said that love of power over others is the dominant thing. But if you have a game which cannot be played except when power over others is a condition of success, love of power grows up as a secondary and derived fact, not as an original and animating force. I see no reason to believe that the majority of important and "successful" business men are sadistic, and love the cruelty arising from power over others for its own sake. I can see how zest for the game may cause even cruelty to take on a romantic visage and render it tolerable in contemplation.

In saying that business is intrinsically a gamble in uncertainties, it is not said that manufacture or transportation of goods is a gamble. They are technological operations, based on physical knowledge of physical materials and energies. The locomotive runs on coal and steam, not on psychical acts of "confidence." But for this reason production and distribution of goods are not themselves business. In business they become instruments of a game in which trumps are possession of capital as a temporary insurance against insecurity. But the game has such a wide reach that there comes a time when the insecurity of the masses spells insecurity for the one holding trumps. The essence of business, as distinct from the techniques of production and distribution, is of course profits. But why profits? Anyone can give the answer. There must be profits in order to induce persons to "take the risks"; it is only fair that those who assume the risks should get paid for doing it. Since there is no explanation of profits which does not come down to this fact, what other evidence is needed of the intrinsic connection of business with insecurity?

Living is attended with risks; there will always be an element of uncertainty in it. One cannot object to business for taking account of this fact. But anyone whom the crisis has awakened from a romantic dream will object to any procedure which systematically sets out to glorify the process of trading in insecurity on the ground that this is the road to profits. We should at least get rid of the vast load of nonsense which now adds to our depression if we were coolly to take business for just what it is, *i.e.*, the pursuit of profit, and cease glorifying it for what it is not. Personally, I believe there would be a great rise in the so-called native I. Q. of the average American if we would get rid of this one source of mental confusion and paralysis. But what is more objectionable is the piling up of insecurity. There is enough risk in living anyway without deliberately increasing it. Take money, for example. We are told that it is a medium of exchange. Well, if it were, it would

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for *controlling* exchange. Hence the concentrated possession of money is a means of intensifying insecurity. The ability to control exchange is the ability to stop it, to tax it, to deflect it. To create a risk and then make a profit by assuming it, is a good rule—for those who control money.

The breakdown in which we are living is the breakdown of the particular romance known as business. It is the revelation that the elated excitement of the romantic adventure has to be paid for with an equal depression. If one knew where the glamor of imagination would next find its outlet, one could predict the future. But the reason why no one has had any success in foretelling the great turns of history is precisely because they come from the imagination and its enthusiasms and not from logic and reason. I do not think the next voyage of imagination is immediately imminent. There is one stage of the present romance not yet exhausted. We are now being captured by the romance of introduction of planning into business. What could be more romantic than the idea of retaining business, which is the process of placing wagers on uncertainties for the sake of profit, and at the same time introducing stability and security into it? So that last act of the present drama will presumably be undertaken before the imagination takes its flight to a new field.

JOHN DEWEY.

The Great Columbia Affair

BEFORE attempting to determine the causes and issues involved in the expulsion of Reed Harris from Columbia College, a word or two about Mr. Harris and his editorial regime seems necessary to determine of what value, if any, his editorship was to the college and the student body. No matter what may be thought of his personal motives, it cannot be denied that he accomplished a very considerable revolution during his editorship: he lifted The Spectator out of the intellectual doldrums into which it had sunk and made of it the most progressive and most interesting college paper in the country. Whereas for years editors of The Spectator had toddled along, publishing editorials on the coming of spring, the greenness of the grass and the crying need for hotter water in the dormitories, Harris looked upon his position as an intellectual responsibility. Accordingly he occupied himself with real, living questions —with the status of college athletics, with the college curriculum, with inquiries into the function of fraternities and secret societies, with literature and poetry on the campus, with the students' delegation to Kentucky and with a host of larger issues.

It is evident that his editorship provided a much needed stimulus to campus thought. Why, then, was he expelled? Nobody is sure, because the Columbia Social Problems Club says one thing, Dean Hawkes says another and Dr. Butler says something else. But although it is possible to hold many views, only four of them are in the least tenable. The first is that he offended too many powerful alumni by calling them "mummified children" and "rah-rah boys"; the second is that he was too "radical"; the third that his writing was discourteous and ungentlemanly; and the fourth that he was irresponsible and made reckless charges which reflected seriously on the university.

The least plausible of all of these views is the first. While it cannot be denied that Harris aroused the ire of many alumni—the president and the secretary of the Alumni Association came out openly against him—it is impossible to believe that the Dean would be influenced by such a consideration. He himself is authority for the statement that no outside pressure was brought to bear upon him. So, no matter how gleefully the alumni received the news, they cannot hold themselves responsible for the expulsion.

Of the other three views, the one which holds the gravest implications for the university is the second. Certainly the hopelessly contradictory statements of Dr. Butler and Dean Hawkes do not help the situation any. And most people have drawn the conclusion that Dean Hawkes' action was taken because of the generally "radical" policy of The Spectator. But it is safe to say that the Dean has no objections to radical sentiments *per se*. If he had, he might just as well have brought about the removal of Messrs. Lamont, Henderson, Tugwell and practically all of the Contemporary Civilization staff—all of whom hold more or less radical views, and all of whom fall under his jurisdiction.

No, the Dean is not a narrow-minded conservative. He told me, in a private conversation, that he did not object to what The Spectator said; it was rather *how* the paper expressed itself. He objected also to the "disrespect" toward the authorities that was manifest in its editorial columns. And, in another informal talk, he used the very words—"insulting" and "discourteous"—which he used later in his statements to the press.

Inasmuch as "discourtesy" was one of the reasons given by Dean Hawkes for discharging Harris from Columbia, I made a thorough study of the editorials that have appeared in The Spectator under Harris' editorship, in order to determine how much real "discourtesy" existed. I find that an overwhelming majority of the editorials are earnest rather than flippant or disrespectful in tone. I can find several which are tactless, and a few which might be construed as impolite.

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The remaining possible reason for the expulsion is the alleged "irresponsibility" and "misrepresentation" of The Spectator under Harris—particularly in two instances: Harris' charge that football is a semi-professional racket, and his charge that the university dining rooms were mismanaged. Concerning the first of these charges, Harris, it is well known, had ample evidence and repeatedly offered to testify before any committee. But when the authorities did nothing about the situation, he let the matter drop. Here, at least, was neither misrepresentation nor irresponsibility. Concerning the dining-room charges, it must be admitted that Harris published them with too little evidence. Although there was no willful misrepresentation, since the source of the charges was correctly attributed and the reader was left to judge their validity for himself, Harris was undoubtedly guilty in this instance of tabloid tactics. But the curious thing about the whole matter is that these very same charges appeared last year under the editorship of another student who was left unmolested.

We must conclude, therefore, that the recklessness of Harris was not the reason for his expulsion. What is left? Merely the generally "discourteous" and "disrespectful" attitude of his paper. And one more item, perhaps: the discredit which some of his disclosures reflected upon the university.

If, as is likely, Harris was expelled not only for his discourtesies, but also for the unwelcome notoriety his disclosure brought to the university, the issue is so clear-cut as to bar argument. Only the most ridiculously patriotic alumnus would argue that an editor has no right to criticize his alma mater. But his criticism undoubtedly hurt the authorities, who saw the name of Columbia dragged in the dust and connected with such unsavory phrases as "professional athletes" and "rackets." Without question, they resented Harris' sharp and ungenteel attacks.

But if Harris was ejected simply because of his "discourtesies," the issue becomes finer and more debatable. Ultimately, it comes down to whether "academic freedom" includes the right to poke fun at the authorities. Many will say no; that there are canons of good taste which an editor should never violate. Nevertheless, I can see no reason for any interference whatever with a student newspaper, so long as it does not become libelous or deliberately untruthful. It ought to be a cardinal principle with all universities that students should be left utterly free to write what and as they please—even if they do occasionally hurt the feelings of the authorities in the process.

The case has yet another encouraging aspect, which can best be illustrated by a significant little incident which occurred during the strike and was overlooked by the newspapers.

During one of the mass meetings, a member of the "football crowd" mounted the platform to [illegible] "Harris," he shouted angrily, "deserved to be kicked out! He attacked the only decent football team we've ever had! He called football a racket! He should have been proud of that team and proud of Columbia for giving him it, and should have backed it up!"

At this point Rob Hall interrupted the speaker and shouted, just a bit louder and just a bit more angrily, "But college students ought to care more for principles than a good football team!"

Whereupon—and there are witnesses to prove this—the students cheered wildly for Hall and booed the speaker off the platform! Shades of John Held's collegians! If this is not a millennium, it as as close to it as one can expect.

The spectacle of young college men working themselves into a frenzy over a principle—not, mind you, a regatta or a football victory, but over a principle—has been so strange, so unprecedented, that we can almost be thankful that the expulsion ever occurred. The whole demonstration (despite the moronic egg-throwing of the athletes and the unwelcome interference of outsiders) is something of which the students ought to be proud; it constitutes a real milestone in the history of the American student body.

JULES L. WALDMAN.

Stay, Gentle Stays!

A SINGLE American industry seems to be flourishing at a rate to make the presidents of cord-tire companies, steel mills and cement works bilious with envy. Strange to say, it is not the production of foolproof airplanes, free-wheeling motor cars or any other vehicle of modern freedom, but the fabrication of a form of restraint which our great-grandmothers called stays and our grandmothers referred to as corsets. According to the Department of Commerce statistics cited by The Merchandise Manager, "The yearly total shot up until, in 1929, it reached in round numbers $80,000,000. Last year, the most disastrous for business generally that modern America has known, it passed that figure, although the exact total is not yet officially available." The report of an organization that goes by the impressive name of The Controllers Congress of the National Retail Dry Goods Association states, "as a profit-maker corsets are so far in the lead that they have no serious competition. The actual figures show a profit for the corset department of 9.1 in the smaller stores to 11.2 in the larger establishments. These very comfortable figures compare with percentages for other departments of .3, 2.6, 1.2."

We had been told so often that women would never, never again lace themselves up that we had begun to believe it. They were all to be Amazons and Atalantas, with no more bones to their bodies than those in them. Whales were abandoned to the movies. Athletic, self-supported females were

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to be with us forever, to the accompaniment of cheers from juniors and seniors who attended college proms, doctors, dieticians and esthetic dancers. Nevertheless, the leaders of American womanhood have changed their minds. They may still go about at country clubs in a state of Greek freedom. But from golf courses and tennis courts, basketball fields and cross-country hikes, they come, rush to the nearest department store, and buy themselves a figure.

"A few years ago manufacturers created the foundation garment and not only revolutionized their industry but laid the foundations for its present prosperity." A revolution was never more dispassionately announced. The word corset, reviving all the terrible things physicians once said it did to the female liver, is something to recoil from; it gives an immediate sense of constriction and suffocation. And who does not want to be free? But a foundation garment—that is another matter. Here is another form of self-sacrificing service that American industry has evolved. The corset is now dedicated in a spirit of humility as a form of unobtrusive architecture to support feminine charm.

The researches of fabric-tire laboratories have of course not been in vain. Foundation garments do not have to be laced by a French maid who braces herself for the effort by sticking a knee into the small of her mistress's back. The more architectonic of these new foundations are fairly elaborate affairs, with rather complicated adjustments of flaps, overlappings and lacings, occasionally simplified by zippers. But the indispensable sense of freedom is preserved because any woman can strap herself in unaided.

All feminine fashions, from the bodices of the First Empire to crinolines and bustles, the "Grecian bend" and the "lobsterpot" train, are different ways of achieving a single purpose; they conceal the physical ugliness of the average woman and at the same time give her some kind of firmness and shape. The straight-line styles that followed the War were so successful for ten years because their much heralded simplicity, although it lifted the hem line and revealed an unexpected assortment of legs, hid all the actual contours more successfully and with less effort than any other fashion since the Roman woman's equivalent for the toga, and were as flattering to flat-chested debutantes as to potty dowagers. Nevertheless, a few seasons ago a certain number of *Grandes Maisons* in Paris decided to make gowns cling. In order to wear them successfully it was necessary for women to have breasts that were not pendulous, hips that did not sway with every step and fairly flat backs. This combination bore the same relation to prevailing feminine anatomy that alcoholic content does to beverages in the Volstead Act. But the female population took to the new modes and determined to wear them. In consequence they are now buying corsets by the carload.

We are undoubtedly only beginning a period devoted to covering up the physical deficiencies of one of the sexes. Last season evening gowns were as low in front as it was possible to make them. The result was such a thinly disguised display of sagging bosoms that this season's evening gowns either reach almost to the clavicle or are puffed out with swirls of silk gathered with artless and delicate suggestiveness. Instead, inspired no doubt by memories of bathing beaches, they are a V in back to the waist line. But the sun seems more merciful than kilowatts. There has already been such an exhibition of backs looking like airplane maps in low relief of the Appalachian foothills, that next year's fashions will undoubtedly reach the lobes of the ears with necklines softened by a narrow ruff, and every woman will attempt to look like the early portraits of Sarah Bernhardt instead of the Empress Eugénie. But in any case, corsets, whatever the ideal shape proves to be, will remain firm enough to make the feminine body take the right lines in the right places, resilient enough to attract the Life Force and sufficiently pliant to yield to it at the right moment.

I have never designed modern gowns, but I have designed a good many theatrical costumes for almost every historic period when women still had an equator. I began my study of design in the life class of the Atelier Julien. It does not require many months of attendance there nor a course in dissection at a medical school to enable anyone to observe that the muscles holding up women's bosoms are hitched somewhere in the vicinity of the outer end of the collar bone. The debutante slouch, cultivated for a few years, depresses them to a point where they are past being revived except by artificial means. In addition, most women seem unable to hold up their insteps, and hide the fact by perching on spike heels. A few years of this form of tiptoeing strains a loose assembly of small bones like those that give flexibility to the wrist, induces more or less toeing-in, bends most insteps into a more or less acute V (producing the prevalent thick ankle, common at twenty and almost universal at forty), and distends the muscles around the Achilles tendon, which swell and join the calf in an unbroken column, usually compared to the supports of the *Grosses Hammerklavier*. To make matters worse, most women's abdominal muscles are inclined to be congenitally weak and start to spread even before child bearing. These elementary anatomical facts can be observed any afternoon on Fifth Avenue or any summer at any bathing beach by anyone not hopelessly in love. They make it plain why the debutante as well as the young matron has taken to long skirts and embraced *Madame la Corsetière*.

Of the hundreds of million dollars that American women spend annually on beauty products, not a decimal fraction seems to be spent below the neck. However, athletics are no substitute for cosmetics.

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convex backs, concave fronts, thick ankles and displaced insteps as their more sedentary sisters. A generation of women who would train their bodies as well as massaging their faces, so that they were certain of their physical personalities, could demand any style they wanted and carry it on no foundation but their own. As it is, the present generation had better await the newest disguise invented for them in Paris.

Why, after all, should they go in for the arduous business of cultivating their own taste and their individual figures when it is so much less trouble to buy a popular type over the counter? Fashion has found its axis again and will no doubt continue to revolve around it in perpetual motion. Woman can still remain free and at the same time have any shape that happens to take her fancy from now until kingdom come. She has put on her foundation garment once again, and is probably right in supposing that, if she likes it, it won't incommode the Lord or the Life Force, the Cosmic Urge or *l'Elan Vital,* the Hormones or the Norns, Aphrodite, *das Ewig Weibliche,* or whatever else it is that makes the world go round. LEE SIMONSON.

The Great Balancing Act

ON A MUDDY April day Homer Graves drove in from his farm out west of Woppington to pay an instalment on his taxes. In his weakened condition he fell an easy prey to Elmer Durkin, the newsdealer, who bade him welcome.

"What you need, Homer, is a fireside squat and soothing conversation. How's your budget, balanced?"

In reply Mr. Graves begged to state that his budget was hopelessly lopsided and had been that way a long time.

"Whenever I lay by anything, the tax collector just pounces down on it. It is very discouraging."

"You're telling *me.* Well, we got one break anyhow, we've ducked the sales tax."

"They voted that down, didn't they, Elmer?"

"And how! Let me slip you the sad scenario of how the responsible Democratic leadership stubbed its constructive toe."

"Any troubles of the Democrats will sound good to me." The honest farmer was already beginning to feel better.

"Don't have too swell a time, Homer, or the government will chisel you for an amusement tax. It is kind of funny, at that. If you remember when the Democrats took over the House with Jack Garner for gavel-buster it listened like the battle of the century. I bit on that one myself and had my face all set for good news. Then what do those babies do but cross the dope and lie down and play dead for the White House? They yessed our Herbert on everything he craved and pulled no [illegible] dodging the unemployed. And did Roosevelt. He didn't have to come out on the for their lovely bedside manner! That's a funny thing about a Democrat; a kind word from a G. O. P. editor goes to his head like a snifter of hooch.

"An ignorant hick like you might not know all the facts of life, but this Raskob-Shouse bunch that runs the works really believes that the party should be a carbon copy of the Republicans. If Democrats never do anything to throw a scare into business they can nick the easy-money lads for campaign jack just like regular people do. I always thought it would be more fun if the parties differed about something, but that is not the Raskobian theory. They should be a twin earache.

"Well, those birds had been looking around for a good man to slip the nomination to as soon as they had Roosevelt good and stopped. Their other entries had not been clicking, so they gave this Garner a little play. I don't claim their intentions were honorable, but they had Cactus Jack hitting the old pipe. He got okays from Hearst and McAdoo, both of which are fatal to all forms of animal life.

"By this time the Treasury was so deep in the red that even Hoover had to admit that something would have to be done besides telling bedtime stories. It was up to Congress to raise the needful and the best Democratic minds came out of the huddle with the sales tax. All we had to do was to stick a tax on everything we needed to eat, drink, wear, burn, live in, ride on, look at and listen to and the cash book would total up even. Then we wouldn't have to soak the rich.

"Barrels of banana oil were spilled to the effect that it was a break for the toiling masses to share the cost of government and not let the upper bracketeers snag all the glory. What this country needs is more ultimate consuming, so these birds were framing it to slap a fine on everybody that tried to buy something.

"When this glad news came down the Avenue the administration snickered into the sleeve of its best hair shirt. Andy Mellon in his palmiest days had never had the nerve to palm off a soak-the-poor racket like this and here it was being pulled by an honest yokel with Texas soil under his fingernails and the milk of contented cows still on his mail-order brogans. This was practically marvelous. Mills would take the jack and the Democrats would take the rap.

"The funny part was that it was a Republican from New York who spilled these lovely beans. Yes, sir, it was the fine Italian hand of La Guardia that touched off the fuse. That little wop shattered the air with his squawks and he woke up the customers. It turned out that paying taxes was not the favorite indoor sport of the toiling masses after all. The sales tax went down with a crash and along went a noble candidate.

"That was a load of unearned increment for

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doesn't have to come out on! He just sat pretty and let that old platinum blond eliminate himself.

"Well, when the sales-tax bill was swept out by the help, the lawmakers leaned their bulging brows together and framed another mess of grief. They jammed this through pronto and passed it on to the Senate.

"Since that dark day we've had the hottest act of squirming, squawking, dodging and buck-passing the world has ever seen. All this bill will do to us is take our heart's blood to the last drop. If we boost the rates on the big incomes, those bims will quit having any incomes. The motor gouge will stop the buying boom which was just about to commence to begin. The amusement tax will kill the theatre, which has already died four times since Christmas. If we put over the stock-transfer levy, Wall Street will move to Montreal. These inheritance taxes are so heavy nobody will croak in the upper brackets. Three-cent postage means curtains for the mail-order business.

"That goes double for cutting down expenses. The bitter cries of the cabinet workers can be heard as far off as Baltimore. Whether it's taxes or economy the patriots all warble the same sad song, 'You try somebody else.' "

"I should think," said the ignorant farmer, "that the government could borrow a couple of billions till things get better."

"Be your age, Homer! Do you want civilization to come crashing down around your tin ears next Saturday afternoon? No, we've got to balance the budget if it's the last thing we ever do." Elmer's gloomy face brightened a little. "The catch is, every guy claims it must be balanced on somebody else's nose."

FELIX RAY.

Washington Notes

Like Planks, Like Platforms—Hoover and the Far West—Curtis-Stick-by-the-Fire—The Bonus of Contention

THE MORE one studies the approaching presidential campaign the less there seems to be to cheer about. If there has been a more depressing prospect in years, I cannot recall when it was. The popular choice will be between two mediocre men, representing parties which stand essentially for the same thing. When the gravity of general conditions and the acuteness of national problems are considered, the state to which practical politics has reduced the country provides nothing to inspire gayety or optimism.

No wonder the progressive Senators contemplate not attending the Republican convention and keeping out of the campaign. I do not want to single them out as worthy of unstinted admiration—the lack of unity and vitality they have displayed during this session has somewhat diminished their prestige and disappointed their friends. However, they form the only contrast to the two old organizations, which are more alike in purposes than they have been in the past. The similarity of the two platforms in 1928 was too marked to escape notice. It will be much more marked this time. There will not, as things have now shaped themselves, be any really distinguishing feature between them—not even prohibition. Within the past week it seems to be pretty generally conceded that the Republicans will adopt a referendum plank on this question, which is as far as the Democrats intend to go. Then it will become a question of what the candidates say. The interest here is, of course, centered upon Mr. Hoover. Those closest to him tell me that he will say no word until his speech of acceptance, and then they expect a pronouncement that will keep the Drys from supporting a repeal Democrat, yet at the same time hold the Wet Republicans inside the party.

It is a nice plan, if it works. The danger, of course, is not that the Republican Drys will bolt the party and vote for a Wetter Democrat, but that they will do as they did in New York in 1930—stay away from the polls. Nearly a million of them did exactly that upstate in the Roosevelt-Tuttle fight of that year, which sufficiently accounted for the 735,000 Roosevelt majority cited so often by his friends as evidence of his strength with the people.

Aside from prohibition, I do not believe there will be an issue or a semblance of an issue between the parties. On economic matters the party leaders on both sides not only see eye to eye, but the record made at this session will leave no room for the Democrats to diverge. Regardless of this extraordinary lack of constructive appeal in the party record or the party program, the continuation of the depression and the deepening of distress, in my judgment, still afford a Democratic advantage.

The effort to build Mr. Hoover up on the grounds of Democratic ineptitude and inanity has had some measure of success. For a while the Republican gloom was lightened. Recently, however, hard-boiled Old Guardsmen from the Pacific Coast have come in here with stories of party conditions which have quenched the newborn hopes kindled by such enthusiastic fellows as the ebullient Allen of Kansas and Hoover's stalwart friend, Vandenberg of Michigan. The truth seems to be that there is not at this time any certainty that Mr. Hoover could carry the rock-ribbed states of Oregon and Washington, and there are those who even have their doubts about California.

The trouble with the political managers of both parties is that they concentrate too deeply upon Ohio, Illinois and New York, and only occasionally take either the West or the South into their calculations. Some of the Far Western pessimism was conveyed in a diluted form to the White House, but I understand that it made no impression. The "Chief," it is said, cannot be disturbed now about local political conditions which he is powerless to control.

The one way in which bad political prospects can be brightened is by improving the condition of the country, and upon that problem Hoover is concentrating all his attention and energy. Nevertheless, this is hardly comforting to the distant political leader who journeys here with certain things on his mind which he wants to unload to the titular party leader and prospective candidate—and to no one else. The disappointment of one of these men was

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to various members of the "corps of correspondents" his views and feelings both as to the ticket and its prospects.

It is interesting, too, that the new drive against the Honorable Charles Curtis as Hoover's running mate comes from Pacific Coast leaders and is a particularly virulent and vigorous drive. Out there they are sick and tired of carrying Curtis. Hoover himself is weight enough for any ticket. For Heaven's sake, they plead, nominate somebody for second place who will lend a little strength. Pick an Atlantic Coast Wet if you want, but get somebody. That is, in effect, the gist of their argument, modified considerably for purposes of publication but reasonably accurate.

One effect of this has been to arouse Mr. Curtis to activity. He has, I am told, been earnestly soliciting support not only among Republican regulars in the Senate but among the progressives. He was, it may be recalled, placed in nomination at Kansas City four years ago by no less a person than Senator Borah. I never yet have understood why Borah nominated him, nor how he could have brought himself to deliver his eulogy of this reactionary Kansas politician. But then, despite his undoubted qualities, there are a good many things about Mr. Borah that his admirers find hard to understand, things that he, perhaps, does not understand himself.

Curtis naturally wants Borah to repeat his performance in the 1932 convention and is not a little disturbed by the prospect that Borah, emulating the example of Norris, may refuse to attend the convention. No one can tell what Mr. Borah will do, but the chances are that he will not stay away from the convention, even if he stays out of the campaign later. However, it is incredible that he will again sponsor Curtis' candidacy, if for no other reason than that it would commit him to the support of the ticket. He could not speak for Curtis in the convention and refuse to speak for him in the campaign. And he could not, of course, speak for Curtis without speaking for Hoover. He isn't likely to make himself as ridiculous as that, though I repeat, no one can tell about Mr. Borah.

Hoover's attitude toward the Curtis situation is reported as being neutral, but that it is is a question which the convention must decide. Of course, if this really is his attitude, the unfortunate Charley is sunk. If Mr. Hoover proposes to keep "hands off" on the vice-presidential nomination, it is equivalent to opposing Curtis, for the convention will not nominate him unless an affirmative nod comes from the White House. In the absence of the nod, they will drop Mr. Curtis on the excuse, if one is needed, of his advanced age—and the danger of nominating for Vice President a man who might have to assume the presidential burden at 73. Actually, that is an almost unanswerable argument, and one, I think, fairly certain to be used by the Democrats in the campaign. The idea of Charley Curtis as President of the United States at any age, at any time, is one to cause any man to shudder, but the notion of his succeeding to the presidency at the age of 73, in these times and under these conditions, is literally appalling. Can any country afford to take such a chance? The more I think about it, the more the idea horrifies me. I am with those Pacific Coast boys—get anybody else.

The most interesting development on the Democratic leadership against the soldiers' bonus proposition. It has occurred both on the House side, where Crisp and Rainey issued anti-bonus statements, and on the Senate side, where leader Robinson denounced the plan as calculated to destroy national credit and add to the depression. So far, I have neither seen nor heard anything definite on this subject from Mr. Hearst's hero, Honest John Garner, but the Speaker is a cautious fellow, prone to hang back rather than rush forward. As a result of the outspoken Democratic opposition, prospects of the passage of the bonus bill have, I suppose, diminished, though I know of no votes that have been changed.

It is painful to report that behind the aforesaid Democratic statements there was something more than patriotic concern for the condition of the national Treasury. There was, in fact, the quite clear idea that should the bonus bill pass, a veto by Hoover would strengthen him with the "business interests." Our Democratic leaders still have those "business interests" well in the front of their minds and consider it very much better not to let Mr. Hoover solidify their support by being the solitary figure to stand between the national Treasury and the Treasury raiders. It is a curious thing how incurably political politicians always are, how entirely impossible it is for them to look at any proposition except with a political slant.

Washington. T. R. B.

Hope and Miss Sands

ON TWO Sunday nights Miss Dorothy Sands has given a program under the title of "Styles in Acting." The scheme of the entertainment is excellent and, in these days of expense and small audiences, ought to be full of possibilities. It is a good enough idea to profit Miss Sands in New York, but it is remarkably well adapted for tours among towns, clubs and colleges. After some introductory notes on the English theatre and the changes it has shown, Miss Sands presents a scene from Congreve, and following that, one from Dryden, a singing act of Madame Vestris', and scenes from Henry Arthur Jones, Eugene O'Neill and Shaw, each preceded by a short introduction and managed with an ingenious change in costume. This ended the first half of the program; the rest of it consisted entirely of impersonations. Taking the sleep-walking scene from "Macbeth" as a kind of base, so to speak, for her improvisations, Miss Sands gave it as it might be done by such players as Miss Haidee Wright, Miss Ethel Barrymore, Miss Laurette Taylor, Miss Mae West, Miss Mary Boland.

Some of these impersonations are already known and always greedily welcomed. They are all capital; those of Miss Wright and Miss Laurette Taylor are brilliant beyond words. In fact, I may almost say that you must have as good an ear and eye as Miss Sands to appreciate their incredible powers of reproduction and witty caricature combined. They translate the qualities most personal and genuine to the actors, their mannerisms and their states of mind, into a most delicious and almost breathless exactitude and comedy. As I listen I can hardly believe the tricks of voice, rhythm and dramatic movement that Miss Sands

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more than the outward aspects of her subjects, is their inner habits and their approach to a role or scene in relation to themselves. By applying this to the tragic realism of such a scene from Shakespeare, she creates a very high and exact irony, much deeper than any mere impersonation of an actress in one of her roles.

It is because this second half of Miss Sands' program is so brilliant and so much more dazzling than the theatre itself often manages to be, that the first part requires as honest and careful criticism as lies in one's power. Anybody who can do what Miss Sands does in these impersonations deserves every little offering possible to the critic's own culture and information, however much or little. The fact remains also that for places outside of New York it is precisely this first part of Miss Sands' venture that may mean most, since people in these far places are not familiar enough with the work of Miss Wright, for example, or Miss Taylor, to realize the marvel of these versions of them.

I must not be heavy about it, I suppose, not too solemn about the elevations and epochal informations and historical nuances in play and playing. Nevertheless, I must say that the whole first layout of Miss Sands' evening is entirely confusing. The remarks made by way of information assume a good deal of historical pomp or at least of easy statistics. We are supposed to get some sort of sketch of what the acting styles and the dramas to be acted have been from time to time, beginning with Congreve. What happens I should never know how to take. We must have some sort of key to go by, and Miss Sands gave me none. The beautiful scene between Millamant and Mirabel came first. Miss Sands—sitting most of the time, which is right—gave us a bit of that hitty-chitty-chitty style of reading which so many actresses have gathered, what with this or that reminiscence from our older theatre, to be the manner in which the comedy of manners disported itself. We needed either to have the reading pushed forward into burlesque—which the introduction had not prepared us for—or else to be given with more of the finish and accuracy that Congreve, if he came back to earth and Broadway, might, if he drank two bottles of cognac first, expect. This scene is one of the finest in the English drama. Its rhythms are as difficult as Shakespeare's; they are more difficult perhaps, in the sense that it is easier to paint in the red-hot style of Salvator Rosa than in the more social and final style of Fragonard—I am taking lesser artists and styles not parallel to either of these dramatists. In this consummate scene, the problem of keeping that continuity and surface cool and perfect and yet expressive of genuine feeling, not to say passion, is one of the most elusive in all acting. There is no need to stay on the point, Miss Sands' Congreve was scarcely Congreve at all, even in the sense stresses of Millamant's lines.

The second number went much farther astray. The guying of the characters' names, as if in the Spain of the Moors and the fashion of the time they could be anything but high-sounding, opened the mistake, which went on throughout the reading. The fact that Dryden himself abandoned this metrical elaboration in his playwriting does not mean that the whole method was absurd—for that matter Ibsen forewe[illegible]

learn to read rhymed dramatic verse, or at least to be frightened before it, remembering that to combine and place the rhyme with the dramatic sense is one of the lessons they finally, with due labor, accomplish at the Comédie Française. In this scene that Miss Sands presented we are nearing the decline of the baroque method in drama, but this does not prove that we have surpassed it; what we saw proved was that we no longer even know what it was.

About the song by Madame Vestris that came next, we have only to recall that Vestris, so ripe in both singing and dramatic roles, sang with style the *fioritura* music of the period and in Paris acted at the Théâtre Français with Talma—that ought to stop our clocks.

By this time we came to the scene from Henry Arthur Jones, a piece of Victorian sentiment, easily guyed and deserving of it, and hit off very happily by Miss Sands.

And then, suddenly, after these two teasing numbers, we were asked to fall into the serious. Miss Sands gave us a scene from "Anna Christie," which was really an impersonation of Miss Pauline Lord in the part, and, save for the voice now and then, an astonishing imitation and a most intelligent reading of the lines. Now this was more like it, this was really a modern style in acting, though also impersonation. The O'Neill scene was followed by the scene in which Candida chooses between her big eloquent baby of a husband and the tragic soul of the young poet, both of whom are candidates for her love. The speeches will almost carry this scene, though at the same time it is clear that the moment is dangerous. A false note and the preachy, thoughtful element will come forward and the heroine will be a bit smug: Shaw just escapes her being so, if he has escaped it wholly. Miss Sands did the scene but passably; more of a certain warm, inexplicable and luminous something would have brought it nearer its possibilities.

What Miss Sands will do to get this first half of her production, so to speak, in key, either on one hand less ambitious in the matter of dramatic periods, styles and artistic contrasts and more in the world of caricature—which will rule out the last two numbers—or on the other hand more carefully studied, prayed over or what you will, is her own affair. At present it is neither flesh, fish nor fowl.

What I think worst in this part of Miss Sands' entertainment goes much further culturally. There seemed to be all along a tendency to imply that we have both progressed and arrived. I understood Miss Sands to mean, and her manner implied, that these earlier dramatic styles were subject to reproach and comicality, as artificial, sentimental and so on, while her modern scenes brought us into drama that shows life as it really is. Certainly she made some such claim of progress and truth for the last two scenes she did. Obviously this claim could be made for Miss Sands as she moved from what she could not do into what she could; but it is essentially outside of culture. Properly, we can see such a series of scenes only as a series of styles in art, each, in so far as it is adequate, exhibiting a form for the life of an epoch, with its thought, habit and movement. The other claim serves in periods of artistic revolution and the battle for a new style, as when Machiavelli declared hanging for the rhetoricians and [illegible]

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careful even in the hint of such a claim, which flatters the crowd into pluming themselves merely on the ground of their century and helps to blind them further to any understanding of art. As forward progress in drama and acting, her series of scenes means nothing at all; such an idea of the limited past and the superior present has but three aspects: it is, as I said, proper to revolt in art; it is stimulating to current fads at any time; and it is characteristic of the perpetual middle-class state of mind. STARK YOUNG.

Very Grand Hotel

THE FILM version of "Grand Hotel," produced by Mr. Edmund Goulding, easily does justice to Fraülein Vicki Baum's Broadway masterpiece. The play was highly adaptable. For one thing, the author was originally influenced by the movies' technique in getting up her dramatic picture of a sort of central clearing house of metropolitan life. For another, as a woman of letters, Fraülein Baum hails from the half-world of Europe's sensational literature, having written many railway-stall novels, noted for their successful vulgarization of supposedly advanced ideas, for their combination of melodrama with a veneer of sophistication. (Hitherto we have, as a matter of truth, not done much importing from this section of European literature; but our greater public has at last, apparently, caught up with the Vicki Baums and the Maurice Dekobras. Here, then, you may see fate checking people's lives in and out of a hotel; you see comedy and tragedy, laughter and death, side by side. Here then at last—for now it can be told!—you see a film that is fully up to the level of the average Broadway play.

In Greta Garbo, playing Grusinskaya, the movie-goers behold an enervated Russian dancer who has just lost her lover, and whose professional work, by ultra-modern logic, suffers thereby. The happy advent of a fast-working though crooked nobleman (played by John Barrymore) brings unblushing release, "rejuvenation"—within but a few hours—and Grusinskaya's professional work immediately thereafter is marked by a tangible improvement. In parallel episodes, Miss Joan Crawford, playing as secretary to the industrialist, Mr. Wallace Beery, is perceived accepting her employer's "propositions" as all in the day's work. All these, and divers other mildly diverting episodes, make up what must be a glittering cross-section of raw life, as it is lived in the upper crust, in some great swanky hotel of Berlin and Paris and New York. Hence, we watch the last exit of Miss Garbo with the happy conviction that, in any case, puritanism in this country is doomed for a long time to come.

Our observations must also record the extremely pathetic decline and fall of Miss Garbo, before whose photograph countless American college boys have been offering up prayers these last ten years. For all her beautiful head and appealingly awkward lankiness, Miss Garbo steadily loses her spell through the sound machines. Speaking our language badly, she must be cast always as a foreigner, mumbling but a few words at a time. As usual she has the air of an aspirin addict; she still wears that perpetual headache which once seemed so intriguing in the deaf-and-dumb [illegible] done his work of hygiene—she is in no sense convincing, and of course never was graceful. A dancer? Advance rumors in the Broadway grapevine had it that Miss Crawford had "stolen" the picture from Miss Garbo. These rumors, promptly denied by the complaisant New York press critics, are hereby corroborated. Miss Garbo's best cinematic work is in the rapid exits across the modernistic lobby of the Grand Hotel, followed by her adoring retinue: a ballet-master, managers and personal maid. Again the maid (Miss Raffaele Ottiano, an unknown), by her make-up and mimetics, virtually steals most of our attention here. Miss Joan Crawford, playing second, shows great potentialities as an actress; she would go far, if the movie industry would let her. Finally, it is Mr. Lionel Barrymore who really dominates the constellation of stars. As the clerk, Kringelein, who is dying of heart trouble, and therefore taking one last fling at rum and gambling, Lionel Barrymore develops almost as much sheer interest in his acting as do certain German artists we have seen here. His distinguished brother, cast simply as a charming young devil, suffers from having much less with which to work.

Direction and photography in this picture are competent, yet mark no perceptible advance over fair talking films that have already been made out of bad theater by men like King Vidor. Of course movietone might far exceed the limits of the theater in certain directions, as René Clair has suggested, by taking its own path, realizing its own genius as a medium. Why, then, does the presence of a galaxy of stars offer us no guarantee of authentic thrills? Why, all working together, do they hit no pitch of sincerity? See Eisenstein: he uses actors who never trod a stage before. Why do our talking pictures consistently miss their great chances as dramatic and plastic medium? Because they are still the hallmarked products of an industry, the American pleasure-industry. The Metro-Goldwyn organization thinks it is being very "artistic," using Vicki Baum and daring an unhappy ending. Still, business is bad. Now a veritable artist turned loose at Hollywood might do wonders with all the fine machinery they have got together.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Einstein and Spiritualism

SIR: . . . I have never met the young lady who gave a demonstration to Einstein, but I know that Einstein's own statement, quoted by Mr. Grattan in *The New Republic* of March 9, is strictly scientific. Einstein says that she told him things which she could not possibly have known normally. Einstein is the only person who could have passed that judgment, and it seems to me that a man of his standing has a right to expect us to assume that he did not make the statement lightly or unthinkingly. If it was so, he knew it was so; then he had to choose between doing his duty as a scientist, or shrinking from the ridicule of those who are content to judge without investigating and who proceed upon the assumption that we know all there is to know about this universe, and that certain happenings are impossible because they are new and not understood.

Mr. Grattan goes on to tell certain things about the woman in question which sound ridiculous, and this ridicule is supposed to be cast upon Einstein. But a careful reading of the article makes it plain that Einstein had nothing to do with the ridiculous things, and the fact that a woman makes absurd statements, such as that [illegible] of the United States in 1937,

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mind when Einstein is in her presence. I myself am prepared to state that on a great number of occasions I have had my mind read, and by several different persons: that is to say, these persons have told me things which were in my mind, and which these persons could not possibly have known normally. Does this mean that I have to believe everything that these various persons say? Does it preclude the possibility that other ideas, of an absurd nature, may drift across the minds of these persons, and that they are without any means of distinguishing between the true and the false? The complications of this subject, and of the human mind which is both the means and the object of our investigation, are so infinite that the slightest thought on the matter should make Mr. Grattan ashamed of having ridiculed a man such as Einstein. The fact that these unknown forces of telepathy and clairvoyance are made use of by charlatans is highly inconvenient; but Mr. Grattan might just as logically deny the reality of a machine gun because it is occasionally used by gangsters.

Incidentally, Einstein is put into the discard because he submitted to being photographed too much in Southern California. Mr. Grattan, having been here, ought to understand our Land of Orange Groves and Jails. Einstein was brought here by an educational institution, in order to be used as an advertisement to help the promoters of the institution get money from the rich. It is a painful but unavoidable fact that that is the only way to keep scientific institutions alive in the United States. Einstein submitted as gracefully and patiently as he could. Being an extremely kind-hearted person, he let himself be taken here and there. He made friendly speeches at banquets, and stood up before the cameras like a lamb before the executioner. After the ordeal was over, he talked about it humorously among his friends. Incidentally, he spoke up for peace and for social justice, and for Tom Mooney—to such effect that a great banker in New York, who had agreed to put up the money to finance his second trip to California, repudiated his promise, declaring that we had enough pacifists and socialists in the United States already, and he did not care to import any from Germany. If you do not believe that and want names, places and dates, I will furnish them. And in fairness to Einstein I might add that I did not get this story from him. On the contrary, he got it from me.

Pasadena, Calif. UPTON SINCLAIR.

SIR: . . . After reading Mr. Grattan's article in The New Republic of March 9, "Why, Dr. Einstein!," I called on Dr. Gabriel Segall, at the Wilshire Medical Building, whom I know to be a personal friend and physician of Dr. Einstein, and I read the article to him. The following is his answer:

"It is absolutely untrue. Dr. Einstein did not go everywhere. He was too busy at the University and refused thousands of invitations. He did go to the opening of Charlie Chaplin's picture because Dr. Einstein admires Chaplin, as he considers him an artist. Dr. Einstein refused all public dinners with the exception of the one given in the interest of international peace and the other which he attended as a Jew in the interest of Palestine.

"It is absolutely untrue that Dr. Einstein is 'camera mad.' He cannot help the situation. When he landed in San Pedro by boat many camera men were there to photograph him. What could he do but to submit to their wishes and often their demands? It is the easiest way out for a man of such a reputation.

"The Gene Dennis claims and press reports about this matter are also untrue. Here is how it all happened. A few days after Dr. and Frau Einstein arrived at the hotel at Palm Springs, the manager of the hotel, who was in charge of their stay there, suggested an automobile ride, to which Dr. Einstein agreed. At the time the suggestion was made, Dr. Einstein did not know Gene Dennis and he did not know that she had made this proposal in order to make a contact with the celebrated guest for publicity. Dr. Einstein, like any other person who does not think in terms of tricks or schemes, consented to the ride and made the best of the situation thereafter. He and his wife were introduced to Gene Dennis in the automobile and Dr. Einstein politely and courteously listened to Miss Dennis. He did not endorse any of her bag of tricks and I doubt whether he knows now what her deliberate purpose was. Dr. and Frau Einstein were really trapped int[illegible]

"It is possible that Dr. Einstein and Upton Sinclair discussed psychic matters, but I do not believe that Mr. Sinclair would say that Dr. Einstein approved or endorsed any of them. I know that Dr. Einstein discredited the method of telling about the future, which he knows to be ridiculous and impossible. Miss Dennis just exploited his reputation without his knowledge. Dr. Einstein cannot control the tricks of people or of the press. He is a kindly, peaceful and grateful man and makes the best of every situation. There is nothing else he can do."

Los Angeles, Calif. SAUL S. KLEIN.

SIR: After carefully reading and considering Mr. Sinclair's commentary on my article, I find that I have nothing to withdraw or justify. I should like to say, by way of clarification, that my attitude toward psychical phenomena is not one of ill considered hostility. It just happens that I have lately examined the life of William James in detail. James, as everyone knows, was interested in these matters and gave them much attention at a time in his career when his normal activities were very exacting of his time. The upshot of his work was an entirely negative conclusion about the possibilities of communicating with any world beyond our own. This is quite different from the approach of a man of no psychological sensitivity, like T. H. Huxley, though the conclusion is the same. I should like to reiterate my opinion that Einstein was wrong publicly to endorse Gene Dennis, particularly since the endorsement was to be used in an atmosphere like that of Hollywood. I call attention to my statement that he should be on the side of the angels on all occasions. I still think that he should be and I hope that his lack of success in cadging money for C. I. T. has taught him a lesson!

Dr. Segall's denials are certainly comprehensive enough, but the reader should compare them with Mr. Sinclair's affirmations and admissions. Above all, it should be known that Einstein wrote a "careful" but sympathetic preface to the German edition of Sinclair's "Mental Radio." Also, Gene Dennis's act ran for several weeks at Warner Brother's Hollywood Theatre, and up until February 14, 1932, when I sailed for New York from San Pedro, no denial of the authenticity of Einstein's endorsement appeared in the press. And I leave it to any reader of the Los Angeles press to comment on Dr. Segall's description of Einstein's social activities!

New York City. C. HARTLEY GRATTAN.

The Hebrew University in Jerusalem

SIR: In an attempt to call the attention of the American public to the outstanding work which the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is doing under difficult conditions, which are hardly to be paralleled any place else in the world, there has been arranged an exceedingly important event to take place on May 1, to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the Hebrew University, of which Dr. Judah L. Magnes has been the head since its founding in 1925.

The Palestine and Egyptian governments are coöperating to the extent of laying special telephone lines from Jerusalem to the Marconi station at Abouzabel, Egypt. . . . If the tests prove successful, Dr. Magnes will deliver the chief address from Mt. Scopus and Sir Arthur Grenfell Wauchope, High Commissioner for Palestine, will preside at the ceremonies which will also mark the opening of the Lamport Botanical Garden, the gift of an American, Solomon Lamport of New York. The National Broadcasting Company has also agreed to permit the use of its vast network in this country for an international broadcast from Europe, dealing with "The Cultural Awakening of the Near East." . . .

In the seven brief years of its existence the University has already played an important part in the upbuilding of a land impoverished and barren for centuries past as a result of continuous dissension. And I may add that all the Hebrew University has been able to achieve has ever been accomplished by the sacrifices of an intensely idealistic administration, faculty and student body, on a total budget of less than the cost of a single department in one of our major universities.

A. C. [illegible]

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The Poet and the World

1919, by John Dos Passos. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

JOHN DOS PASSOS is in reality two novelists. One of them is a late-Romantic, an individualist, an esthete moving about the world in a portable ivory tower; the other is a collectivist, a radical historian of the class struggle. These two authors have collaborated in all his books, but the first had the larger share in "Three Soldiers" and "Manhattan Transfer." The second, in his more convincing fashion, has written most of "The 42nd Parallel" and almost all of "1919." The difference between the late-Romantic and the radical Dos Passos is important not only in his own career: it also helps to explain the recent course of American fiction.

The late-Romantic tendency in his novels goes back to his years in college. After graduating from a good preparatory school, Dos Passos entered Harvard in 1912, at the beginning of a period which was later known as that of the Harvard esthetes. I have described this period elsewhere, in reviewing the poems of E. E. Cummings, but I did not discuss the ideas which underlay its picturesque manifestations, its mixture of incense, patchouli and gin, its erudition displayed before barroom mirrors, its dreams in the Cambridge subway of laurel-crowned Thessalian dancers. The esthetes themselves were not philosophers; they did not seek to define their attitude; but most of them would have subscribed to the following propositions:

That the cultivation and expression of his own sensibility are the only justifiable ends for a poet.

That originality is his principal virtue.

That society is hostile, stupid and unmanageable: it is the world of the philistines, from which it is the poet's duty and privilege to remain aloof.

That the poet is always misunderstood by the world. He should, in fact, deliberately make himself misunderstandable, for the greater glory of art.

That he triumphs over the world, at moments, by mystically including it within himself: these are his moments of *ecstasy,* to be provoked by any means in his power—alcohol, drugs, madness or saintliness, venery, suicide.

That art, the undying expression of such moments, exists apart from the world; it is the poet's revenge on society.

That the past has more dignity than the present.

There are a dozen other propositions which might be added to this unwritten manifesto, but the ideas I have listed were those most generally held, and they are sufficient to explain the intellectual atmosphere of the young men who read "The Hill of Dreams," and argued about St. Thomas in Boston bars, and contributed to The Harvard Monthly. The attitude was not confined to one college and one magazine. It was often embodied in The Dial, which for some years was almost a postgraduate edition of The Monthly; it existed in earlier publications like The Yellow Book and La Revue Blanche; it has a history, in fact, almost as long as that of the upper middle class under capitalism. For the last half-century it has furnished the intellectual background of poems and essays without number. It would seem to preclude, in its adherents, the objectivity that is generally associated with good fiction; yet the esthetes themselves sometimes wrote novels, as did their predecessors all over the world. Such novels, in fact, are still being published, and favorably criticized: "Mr. Zed has written the absorbing story of [illegible] the author portrays with witty malice, prevents him from breaking away. After an unhappy love affair and the failure of his artistic hopes, he commits suicide. . . ."

Such is the plot forever embroidered in the type of fiction that ought to be known as the Art Novel. There are two essential characters, two antagonists, the Poet and the World. The Poet—who may also be a painter, a violinist, an inventor, an architect or a Centaur—is generally to be identified with the author of the novel, or at least with the novelist's ideal picture of himself. He tries to assert his individuality in despite of the World, which is stupid, unmanageable and usually victorious. Sometimes the Poet triumphs, but the art novelists seem to realize, as a class, that the sort of hero they describe is likely to be defeated in the sort of society which he must face. This society is rarely presented in accurate terms. So little is it endowed with reality, so great is the author's solicitude for the Poet, that we are surprised to see him vanquished by such a shadowy opponent. It is as if we were watching motion pictures in the dark house of his mind. There are dream pictures, nightmare pictures; at last the walls crash in and the Poet disappears without ever knowing what it was all about; he dies by his own hand, leaving behind him the memory of his ecstatic moments and the bitter story of his failure, now published as a revenge on the world of the philistines.

The art novel has many variations. Often the World is embodied in the Poet's wife, whose social ambitions are the immediate cause of his defeat. Or the wife may be painted in attractive colors: she is married to a mediocre Poet who finally and reluctantly accepts her guidance, abandons his vain struggle for self-expression, and finds that mediocrity has its own consolations, its country clubs and business triumphs—this is the form in which the art novel is offered to readers of The Saturday Evening Post. Or again the Poet may be a woman who fights for the same ambitions, under the same difficulties, as her male prototypes. The scene of the struggle may be a town on the Minnesota prairies, an English rectory, an apartment on Washington Square or Beacon Hill; but always the characters are the same; the Poet and the World continue their fatal conflict; the Poet has all our sympathies. And the novelists who use this plot for the thousandth time are precisely those who believe that originality is a writer's chief virtue.

Many are unconscious of this dilemma. The story rises so immediately out of their lives, bursts upon them with such freshness, that they never recognize it as a familiar tale. Others deliberately face the problem and try to compensate for the staleness of the plot by the originality of their treatment. They experiment with new methods of story-telling—one of which, the stream of consciousness, seems peculiarly fitted to novels of this type. Perhaps they invest their characters with new significance, and rob them of any real significance, by making them symbolic. They adopt new manners, poetic, mystical, learned, witty, allusive or obfuscatory; and often, in token of their original talent, they invent new words and new ways of punctuating simple declarative sentences. Not all their ingenuity is wasted. Sometimes they make valuable discoveries; a few of the art novels, like "The Hill of Dreams," are among the minor masterpieces of late-Romantic literature; and a very few, like "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," are masterpieces pure and simple.

Dos Passos's early books are neither masterpieces nor are they pure examples of the art novel. The world was [illegible] painfully real; it was never veiled with

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consider the plot of a novel like "Three Soldiers." A talented young musician, during the War, finds that his sensibilities are being outraged, his aspirations crushed, by society as embodied in the American army. He deserts after the Armistice and begins to write a great orchestral poem. When the military police come to arrest him, the sheets of music flutter one by one into the spring breeze; and we are made to feel that the destruction of this symphony, this ecstatic song choked off and dispersed on the wind, is the real tragedy of the War. Some years later, in writing "Manhattan Transfer," Dos Passos seemed to be undertaking a novel of a different type, one which tried to render the color and movement of a whole city; but the book, as it proceeds, becomes the story of Jimmy Herts (the Poet) and Ellen Thatcher (the Poet's wife), and the Poet is once again frustrated by the World: he leaves a Greenwich Village party after a last drink of gin and walks out alone, bareheaded, into the dawn. It is obvious, however, that a new conflict has been superimposed on the old one: the social ideas of the novelist are now at war with his personal emotions, which remain those of The Dial and The Harvard Monthly. Even in "1919," this second conflict persists, but less acutely; the emotional values themselves are changing, to accord with the ideas; and the book as a whole belongs to a new category.

"1919" is distinguished, first of all, by the very size of the project its author has undertaken. A long book in itself, containing 473 pages, it is merely the second chapter, as it were, of a novel which will compare in length with "Ulysses," perhaps even with "Remembrance of Things Past." Like the latter, it is a historical novel dealing with the yesterday that still exists in the author's memory. It might almost be called a news novel, since it uses newspaper headlines to suggest the flow of events, and tells the story of its characters in reportorial fashion. But its chief distinction lies in the author's emphasis. He is not recounting the tragedy of bewildered John Smith, the rise of ambitious Mary Jones, the efforts of sensitive Richard Robinson to maintain his ideals against the blundering malice of society. Such episodes recur in this novel, but they are seen in perspective. The real hero of "The 42nd Parallel" and "1919" is society itself, American society as embodied in forty or fifty representative characters who drift along with it, struggle to change its course, or merely to find a secure footing—perhaps they build a raft of wreckage, grow fat on the refuse floating about them; perhaps they go under in some obscure eddy—while always the current sweeps them onward toward new social horizons. In this sense, Dos Passos has written the first American collective novel.

The principal characters are brought forward one at a time; the story of each is told in bare, straightforward prose. Thus, J. Ward Moorehouse, born in Wilmington, Delaware, begins his business career in a real-estate office. He writes songs, marries and divorces a rich woman, works for a newspaper in Pittsburgh—at the end of fifty-seven pages he is a successful public-relations counselor embarked on a campaign to reconcile labor and capital at the expense of labor. Joe and Janey Williams are the children of a tugboat captain from Washington, D. C.; Janey studies shorthand; Joe plays baseball, enlists in the navy, deserts after a brawl and becomes a merchant seaman. Eleanor Stoddard is a poor Chicago girl who works at Marshall Field's; she learns how to speak French to her customers and order waiters about "with a crisp little refined moneyed voice." All these characters, first introduced in "The 42nd Parallel," reappear in "1919," where they are joined by others: Richard Ellington, a high-school boy who goes to Harvard and writes poetry; Daughter, a warm-hearted flapper from Dallas, Texas; Ben Compton, a spectacled Jew from Brooklyn who becomes a Wobbly. Gradually their careers draw closer together, till finally all of them are caught up in the War.

"This whole goddam war's a gold brick," says Joe Williams. "It ain't on the level, it's crooked from A to Z. No matter how it comes out, fellows like us get the s——y end of the stick, see? Well, what I say is all bets is off . . . every man go to hell in his own way . . . and three strikes is out, see?" Three strikes is out for Joe, when his skull is cracked in a saloon brawl at St. Nazaire, on Armistice night. Daughter is killed in an airplane accident; she provoked it herself in a fit of hysteria after being jilted by Dick Savage—who for his part survives as the shell of a man, all the best of him having died when he decided to join the army and make a career for himself and let his pacifist sentiments go hang. Benny Compton gets ten years in Atlanta prison as a conscientious objector. Everybody in the novel suffers from the War and finds his own way of going to hell—everybody except the people without bowels, the empty people like Eleanor Stoddard and J. Ward Moorehouse, who stuff themselves with the proper sentiments and make the right contacts.

The great events that preceded and followed the Armistice are reflected in the lives of all these people; but Dos Passos has other methods, too, for rendering the sweep of history. In particular he has three technical devices which he uses both to broaden the scope of the novel and to give it a formal unity. The first of these consists of what he calls "Newsreels," a combination of newspaper headlines, stock-market reports, official communiqués and words from popular songs. The Newsreels effectively perform their function in the book, that of giving dates and atmospheres, but in themselves, judged as writing, they are not successful. The second device is a series of nine biographies interspersed through the text. Here are the lives, briefly told, of three middle-class rebels, Jack Reed, Randolph Bourne and Paxton Hibben; of three men of power, Roosevelt, Wilson and J. P. Morgan; and of three proletarian heroes. All these are successful both in themselves and in relation to the novel as a whole; and the passage dealing with the Wobbly martyr, Wesley Everest, is as powerful as anything Dos Passos has ever written.

The Camera Eye, which is the third device, introduces more complicated standards of judgment. It consists in the memories of another character, presumably the author, who has adventures similar to those of his characters, but describes them in a different style, one which suggests Dos Passos's earlier books. The Camera Eye gives us photographs rich in emotional detail:

> Ponte Decimo in Ponte Decimo ambulances were parked in a moonlit square of bleak stone working-people's houses hoarfrost covered everything in the little bar the Successful Story Writer taught us to drink cognac and maraschino half and half
>
> havanuzzerone
>
> it turned out he was not writing what he felt he wanted to be writing What can you tell them at home about the war? it turned out he was not wanting what he wrote he wanted to be feeling cognac and maraschino was no longer young (It made us damn sore we greedy for what we felt we wanted tell 'em all they lied see new towns go to Genoa) havanuzzerone? it turned out that he wished he was a naked brown shepherd boy sitting on

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Exactly the same episode, so it happens, is described in Dos Passos's other manner, his prose manner, during the course of a chapter dealing with Dick Savage:

> That night they parked the convoy in the main square of a godforsaken little burg on the outskirts of Genoa. They went with Sheldrake to have a drink in a bar and found themselves drinking with the Saturday Evening Post correspondent, who soon began to get tight and to say how he envied them their good looks and their sanguine youth and idealism. Steve picked him up about everything and argued bitterly that youth was the lousiest time in your life, and that he ought to be goddam glad he was forty years old and able to write about the war instead of fighting in it.

The relative merit of these two passages, as writing, is not an important question. The first is a good enough piece of impressionism, with undertones of E. E. Cummings and Gertrude Stein. The style of the second passage, except for a certain conversational quality, is almost colorless; it happens to be the most effective way of recording a particular series of words and actions; it aspires to no other virtue. The first passage might add something to a book in which, the plot being hackneyed or inconsequential, the emphasis had to be placed on the writing, but "1919" is not a novel of that sort. Again, the Camera Eye may justify itself in the next volume of this trilogy —or tetralogy—by assuming a closer relation to the story and binding together the different groups of characters; but in that case, I hope the style of it will change. So far it has been an element of disunity, a survival of the art novel in the midst of a different type of writing, and one in which Dos Passos excels.

He is, indeed, one of the few writers in whose case an equation can accurately and easily be drawn between social beliefs and artistic accomplishments. When he writes individualistically, with backward glances toward Imagism, Vorticism and the Insurrection of the Word, his prose is sentimental and without real distinction. When he writes as a social rebel, he writes not flawlessly by any means, but with conviction, power and a sense of depth, of striking through surfaces to the real forces beneath them. This last book, in which his political ideas have given shape to his emotions, and only the Camera Eye remains as a vestige of his earlier attitude, is not only the best of all his novels; it is, I believe, a landmark in American fiction.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

A Dirt Farmer Visits Russia

Russia: Market or Menace? by Thomas D. Campbell. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 148 pages. $1.50.

THIS IS an amazing book of adventures by Thomas D. Campbell, an outstanding leader in large-scale farming in the United States. The author is not a journalist, professional economist, globe-trotter or propagandist. He is a man of action, a wiry, dynamic person who has spent most of his life on the wide plains of the West, directing plowing, sowing and reaping on immense grain farms. The descendant of pioneer stock, acquainted at first hand with the hardships and struggles of those who labor on the land, Mr. Campbell is peculiarly fitted to pass [illegible] on the realities of the Russian agricultural scene. rooms over tea cups and perfumed cigarettes, that dirt and sweat and knotted hands are the inevitable accompaniments of work, always and everywhere. He may be accurately described as "an old-fashioned American." He believes that our government was founded in the interest of, and dedicated to the welfare of, the plain people, not to the cupidity and luxury of a narrow plutocracy. Hence, while he dissents vigorously from the orthodox doctrines of communism, he enters into the spirit of the Russian leaders who are actually working at the task of lifting the long sunken peasants of Russia to a higher level of labor, living and education. He cares little for the speculations of Karl Marx but he knows a good peasant home from a bad one and the difference between toil with a scythe and toil with a self-binder or a combine. He loves to see things done with verve and rush, and he found immense delight in the restless drive of the Five Year Plan in operation.

So much for the author; now the book. It is a plain, straightforward story of two visits of Mr. Campbell and his family to Russia. Its permanent value lies in the descriptions of things experienced—travel on the trains, life in hotels, nights at the theatres, a conversation with Stalin, dinners with officials, trips to shops, automobile rides at tearing speed along dreadful Russian roads, street scenes, night-prowling through highways and byways, debates with labor managers, chaffering with bronzed men and women at work in the fields. For the reader with eyes to see, these glimpses are more important than many a document crowded with figures.

The volume is of particular significance, of course, with respect to agricultural economy. Here are precise descriptions by a competent technician of the collective farms, the state farms and the old Russian system of tillage. Details of organization, management and operation are given with clear-cut precision. The difficulties of the *kulak* are described without any attempt to gloss over the cruelties of the famous "liquidation." Glimpses of the mighty drive for industrialization are given here and there, leaving the impression that an unconquerable spirit is behind it.

Around the edges of the central theme are fringes. Even the communist attack on religion is not avoided. Mr. Campbell does not sympathize with atheism. On the contrary, he is a believer himself; but he is convinced that a large part of the hostility to religion in Russia must be attributed to the intimate association of Church and State in the old regime and to the support which the clergy formerly gave to illiteracy and superstition. When the wreckage is cleared away, he thinks, there will be a swing back to wider tolerance, if not to religious faith.

And what is the upshot in a few words? The communists are driving forward in spite of immense obstacles. They are shrewd. They change tactics in a constant effort to meet popular demands for goods and services. They now know that their future depends on performances rather than orations on communism. Their grand purpose is to raise the standard of life for the whole people—even for the very humblest at the bottom. The outcome will be different from expectations; probably a democratic government coupled with a highly socialized economy. Such an order is no menace to the United States, in Mr. Campbell's opinion. Russian trade with America should be fostered. In Russia lie immense opportunities for American manufacturers and for American managerial and engineering enterprises. Life in Russia is undoubtedly hard; it was hard for the pioneers of America; but if the Russians keep up the battle, as they promise to do, they will

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Campbell does not argue or preach; he describes and draws the conclusions of a practical man with an eye for work rather than windy words. CHARLES A. BEARD.

The Southern Labor Myth

Textile Unionism and the South, by George Sinclair Mitchell. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 92 pages. $1.

Strike Injunctions in the New South, by Duane McCracken. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 291 pages. $3.

I REMEMBER an industrial exposition in New York City several years ago depicting the glamors of the New South. The most romantic feature of this economic fairyland was the docility of Southern labor. Soon the prosaic revolts of the mill workers at Gastonia, Elizabethton, Marion and Danville broke the illusion. After reading George Sinclair Mitchell's "Textile Unionism and the South" and Duane McCracken's "Strike Injunctions in the New South," one wonders how the myth of Southern labor's supineness persists in the face of the facts they present.

Mitchell, who with his brother Broadus recently wrote on the wider aspects of the problem in "The Industrial Revolution in the South," has in his present volume confined himself to the struggles of the Southern textile worker. He finds that the Southern operative has been responding to the call of unionism for almost half a century, and that at five distinct periods the unions in the field have had marked success in signing membership—1886-87, 1898-1902, 1913-18, 1919-21 and 1929-30. The Southern mill hands have sampled the Knights of Labor in the eighties, the National Union of Textile Workers at the close of the last century, the United Textile Workers (the present affiliate of the American Federation of Labor) since 1901, the Industrial Workers of the World in 1914, and the (Communist) National Textile Workers' Union in the last two or three years. For a time they controlled the National Union of Textile Workers and established the union's headquarters in the South.

The Southern mill hands, however, have never been strong enough to carry on their battles unassisted by Northern money and personnel. Unfortunately, little help may be expected from the United Textile Workers and the A. F. of L. in the future, and that little is likely to be poisoned by the new philosophy of union-management coöperation which has grown as fighting blood has cooled. There is nothing in Mitchell's book to support his statement "that the new policy is a more acceptable one to mill management and to middle-class opinion in the South than the old readiness to fight." On the contrary, injunctions, troops, abductions, beatings and killings have shown that the Southern employer is of the same flesh and blood as his Northern rivals. Where middle-class opinion has veered to the cause of Southern labor, its sympathy has been based upon an understanding of the urgency of the workers' demands rather than upon an idealization of the usefulness of trade unions to capital. There is nothing in Mitchell's presentation which would indicate, as he seems to hold, that the Communists or other radical organizers are permanently eliminated from the South. The Southern worker, like laborers elsewhere, seems eager to follow those who dare lead him to do battle for himself. The legendary submissiveness of labor below the Mason and Dixon line applies merely to Southern industry [illegible] of recruits; it disappears as soon as these are transformed into veteran troops of industrialism.

Professor McCracken has made case studies of five recent labor-injunction suits in the South. Two involved the typographical unions at Raleigh and Asheville, North Carolina. The other three arose from the historic textile strikes at Marion, Elizabethton and Danville. Five cases are not enough from which to generalize with confidence, but the newness of labor injunctions in the South—the Raleigh Typographical case in 1921 was the first in the history of North Carolina—justifies preliminary summarization. From investigations in the field and perusal of the available documents, the author decides that in none of the strikes studied was the injunction solely responsible for breaking the strike. The court order played some part, but economic conditions and especially the police and troops were the determining factors in defeating the workers. This does not lead him to the conclusion that, therefore, injunctions are harmless. He recognizes that they proved only partially effective because the strikers in the main disregarded them. In the North strikers or their leaders are usually sophisticated—and hence scared enough to obey injunctions. To the extent that they do not, the effectiveness of the judicial decrees is crippled, as in the Southern illustrations cited. LOUIS STANLEY.

Any Old War Will Do

Memoirs of a Soldier of Fortune, by General Rafael de Nogales. New York: Harrison Smith. 380 pages. $4.

IN 1914 the author of this book temporarily abandoned his efforts to shoot up the Venezuelan government and went to Europe to offer his valuable services. He offered them first to Belgium, for reasons of sentiment; but he learned that his citizenship would have to be surrendered. After a time, when it had begun to look as if he might not get into the affair at all, he got a nod from the other side. He joined the Turkish army, retaining his Venezuelan citizenship. "After all, a cause is a cause. It may be more or less just; what is said in its defense may be more or less true. Who can be certain? But . . . I, being a professional soldier, naturally had to take a hand in the war."

Even today, though hamburger steak no longer needs a *nom de guerre*, and the American Legion permits Madame Schumann-Heink to sing unmolested, such an attitude as this is startling, not to say epic. And, at a time when scarcely anyone has a decent word for war, "My motto," says the General, "has always been: 'When you see a good war, go to it!'" To his credit it must be said that the General reserves the right to dispute his own "cause" theory in connection with his native country. A large part of his extraordinary exertions have been toward the liberation of his people, and his strongest language goes into a bitter and personal indictment of President Gomez, the dictator. But perhaps it is his general indifference to causes which lends the book its definite charm.

It is patent, at any rate, that such moral complaisance, combined with an active and fiery nature, would be bound to assure a life of unusual adventure. At random: in the year 1903, casting about for a good war, the trouble brewing in the East caught his fancy. So the General wound up his career as cowpuncher in Mexico—with a regrettable poker-game killing—and hopped a tramp ship to the Orient. He got into the thick of things at once, acting as a spy for the Japanese. (He refers to this as

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ties he calls "borrowing cows.") Sometimes—there is always a trough between two waves—between one revolution and the next he had to be satisfied with pacific pastimes. In those dog-days, he might have been found hunting gold in Alaska or Nevada, or lions and elephants in Africa; or, for that matter, dodging the bullets of snipers in the jungles with his nine-times-written book under his arm.

It hardly need be said that the General is not a literary gentleman. Readers of a literary turn will find latent "material"—and perhaps no more than that—for several such episodes as became, in the hands of De Quincy, "The Flight of a Tartar Tribe." At the same time, there is plenty of fresh, excellent descriptive writing in the book, as in the chapters dealing with the campaigns against Gomez. Of his own savage and voluptuous country, particularly the lethal and fascinating *llanos,* the author writes intimately, lovingly and with complete familiarity.

DONALD MINOT YOUNG.

Book Notes

ARKANSAS

BACK YONDER, by Wayman Hogue. *New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 303 pages, illustrated. $3.*

"Back Yonder" is distinctive among the many books which have approached the people of the Ozarks or their near cousins, the mountaineers of Kentucky and Tennessee. In the fiction which has dealt with them, in the drama, even in serious criticism or passages of history, one has too often been aware of the effort to exploit or the tendency to marvel. Their speech is usually too little felt as the speech of living men; it is set down as something quaint and—the final encomium!—"Elizabethan." These recollections by Wayman Hogue are a literal record, written with feeling, and their slow style creates both a cumulative pleasure and a final sense of conviction. In the episodes, the character sketches, most of all in the few bits of narrative built up through dialogue, nothing lies between the reader and what they have to reveal. They possess, in short, a singular integrity. Instead of marveling at the language, suddenly one is at home in it; what remains is drama at its core. Slight as the few sketches are, simple as is the intention of the book, it seems one of the truest of the many current records of a firmly outlined people and a vanishing past.

FOLKLORE OF ROMANTIC ARKANSAS, by Fred W. Allsopp. *Kansas City: The Grolier Society. 2 vols. 704 pages. Trade edition, $3 per volume; autographed edition, $10 per set.*

Here is an omnibus from which may be drawn Indian legends, tales of Mexican gold caches in the Ozarks, stories of outlaws, songs, ghost stories, bits of Negro lore and a good deal of the old-time plantation manner. The book is full of courtly references to local writers and contributors, and it uses the "aside" as freely as an old-fashioned melodrama. But let no one think the less of it for this opulent departure from the current impersonal style in such matters. It is true that the editor seems uncertain as to the usage of the word "folklore," but his generous compendium is full of invaluable folklore materials. No fragment has been too small for him to trace. His sense of the past pins down many an ephemeral character and many a slight but colorful turn of history. He offers what is sometimes richly offered in county histories, particularly those of California; but with a more than Californian abundance he has roamed for material over a whole state, collecting bits of remembrance which may in time be fused into an understanding of a whole people.

BIOGRAPHY

SAINTS AND SINNERS, by Gamaliel Bradford. *Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 262 pages. $3.50.*

Saints Francis Thomas à Kempis, Fénelon, Sinners: Bradford's last volume of "psychographs," biographical studies in which he has attempted to pierce beneath the facts and illuminate the soul. Cesare Borgia to him exemplifies the riot of youth in an age that was essentially youthful and riotous. Francis of Assisi is God's, Casanova the Devil's, vagabond. Perhaps the study of Thomas à Kempis, "Alone with God," is most thoughtful and most revealing. Talleyrand is the Prince of Darkness, the secret of whose nature is that he early lost the power of "caring," even for himself; although he cared more for himself than others. Fénelon is the priest who successfully combines God and the World. The chapter on Byron is called "The Glory of Sin." On the whole there would seem to be less light in "Saints and Sinners," published almost at the moment of the author's death, than there was in some of Mr. Bradford's earlier volumes. But the method he followed during his long career was successful to the end in producing integrated and entertaining studies of character.

PSYCHOLOGY

INVENTION AND THE UNCONSCIOUS, by Joseph-Marie Montmasson. *Translated by H. Stafford Hatfield. International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 338 pages. $4.*

The most interesting feature of this monograph on the origin of inventions and discoveries is the large amount of source material it contains. Mathematics, the physical and biological sciences, ethics, esthetics and technology are all illustrated by examples and anecdotes relating to major contributions in each field. How Leibnitz invented integral calculus, Daguerre's forerunner of photography, Claude Bernard's experiments in nutrition, the social and ethical speculations of Le Bon, Tarde, Comte and Nietzsche, and accounts of many technical devices from the common match to the spinning jenny and the locomotive: all this material, drawn mostly from original sources, is of decided value to psychologist and layman alike. The theoretical portion of Montmasson's book emphasizes the role played by the unconscious and by chance in the process of discovery, whether scientific or purely speculative. Here the influence of Bergson, Rignano and Fouillée is evident: the Freudian theories of the unconscious are completely ignored. The author's main position is that all mental activities, sensory, emotional and intellectual, both conscious and unconscious, tend toward an integration whose highest expression is in the work of invention and discovery.

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF HUMAN STUPIDITY, by Walter B. Pitkin. *New York: Simon and Schuster. 574 pages. $3.50.*

What ails the world? Stupidity, nothing but stupidity. To prove it, Mr. Walter B. Pitkin steps briskly to the world footlights and wickedly unslings a sack from which he produces samples of the same—historic, current, cumulative and million-phased. Mr. Pitkin's vision is of the clear type which will have nothing to do with patterns of power—whether political, social or economic—or their implications, but pierces directly through phenomena of all sorts to the species Man. Sighting numbers of incidental phases in the tide of class conflict, he judges them tartly in psychological terms, leaving out the sociological contexts which are the bane of petty minds. On occasion he embraces Taine and expatiates on character and climate, and again he goes Nordic with Stoddard, showing that the Russians are cattle and the Irish scum. And throughout the book he emphasizes the existence of psychologically detrimental types—the bigot, for example, who is "emotionally devoted to some oversimplified set of ideas. . . ." All in all, the author gets along so tersely and briskly with his thesis that at times one almost forgets the book is a mere heap of incongruities, haywired together in a press of abstract words.

FICTION

THE PRICE OF LIFE, by Vladimir Lidin. *Translated by Helen C. Matheson. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.*

Vladimir Lidin, who won literary recognition long before the revolution, is perhaps the most versatile of the Fellow Travelers. His subjects range from the life of fishermen to night life in the

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West. Particularly is he interested in the lonely and unstable individual. "The Price of Life," dealing with the period of the New Economic Policy and written in what the Soviet critics call the socio-psychological genre, is not the most successful of his literary efforts. Kiril Bessonov, the hero of the novel, is a young peasant boy who is sent to the university to study engineering at government expense. There he falls under the decadent influence of Nepmen; he betrays his ideals for a shortcut to wealth and fame. The author then gives a detailed description of the Russian bohemia, with gypsies, vodka and poetry recitals, a familiar theme to writers who spent their literary apprenticeship in our own Greenwich Village. Finally, after committing robbery and murder, disillusioned in life and love, Kiril decides that the life of an apostate isn't worth living; he decides to return and begin life anew. To this story the translator or the American publishers have seen fit to add the subtitle, "Youth Pitted against Soviet Tyranny."

RUMOR AT NIGHTFALL, by Graham Greene. *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.*

As a romantic novel, Mr. Greene's new book is less effective than "The Man Within." Against the background of a post-Carlist disturbance in the Pyrenees, the author stages a post-Conradian tragedy, in which the principal actors are two Englishmen and a superstitious señorita. These characters stagger under the overwhelming weight of their own mental questionings and probings. Suspense—the expected appearance of Caveda, the leader of the revolt—is well maintained. But Mr. Greene's forte is his ability to cover places and objects with atmosphere laid on heavily, like paint.

Readers of Matthew Josephson's article in the issue of April 13, "How to Make a Coup d'Etat," will remember that it was based on a book by G. Malaparte, "La Technique du Coup d'Etat." An English translation of Malaparte's book has just been announced for summer publication by E. P. Dutton and Company. The title tentatively chosen is "How to Overthrow the State."

Contributors

JOHN T. FLYNN, a frequent contributor to the chief American magazines, is the author of "Investment Trusts Gone Wrong!" (The New Republic Dollar Series) and of "Graft in Business," which was published last September by the Vanguard Press. He has recently completed a biography of John D. Rockefeller, which will appear next fall under the imprint of Harcourt, Brace.

JOHN DEWEY's most recent contribution to his long list of books is "Philosophy and Civilization," which Minton, Balch brought out last fall.

JULES L. WALDMAN, a senior at Columbia College, is associate editor of the literary magazine, Varsity Review, contributing editor of The Spectator, the campus daily, and an occasional book reviewer for metropolitan newspapers.

LEE SIMONSON, well known scenic artist and a member of the board of directors of the Theatre Guild, has designed a large number of productions—among them "Liliom," "Heartbreak House" and "Marco Millions." He is the author of "Minor Prophecies" and "The Stage Is Set," which Harcourt, Brace will publish next September.

CHARLES A. BEARD, who describes himself as "a dairy farmer of Connecticut," but who is more generally known for his numerous books on politics and history, recently published "The Navy: Defense or Portent?"

LOUIS STANLEY is a contributing editor of The New Leader and a lecturer on labor problems at the Rand School of Social Science.

DONALD MINOT YOUNG, who has been free-lancing in New York City during the past winter, is now occupying the position of cadet on a freighter plying between New York and Maracaibo.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON, critic and biographer, is the author of several books, of which the most recent is a life of Rousseau

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